

**MINUTES OF THE BATHFORD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
HELD ON 20 APRIL 2009 AT 7.30PM IN THE PARISH HALL, CHURCH STREET,
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 Ian Plain
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham
Beat Manager PC Simon Glanfield (Speaker)
Beth Shire – Crime Reduction Officer (Speaker)
Trevor Wilmott – Police Neighbourhood Watch Team (Speaker)
Gabriel Batt (Ward Councillor)
Ruth Holding (Clerk)
27 members of the public signed attendance sheet

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Apologies were received from Cllr Keith Masdin, Mr Parr, Mr Burlton, Mr Cox, Mrs Napier, Ms Breeze and Revd Tim Ling.

2. Welcome and Introductions

- 2.1. Chair Shirley Beazer opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. She introduced the Parish Councillors present, co-opted members of committees and the Clerk. She also welcomed Ward Councillor Gabriel Batt, Polly Jordan the Sheltered Housing Officer for the Mountain Wood Bungalows and thanked PC Simon Glanfield and his colleagues for attending.
- 2.2. Chair Shirley Beazer said that copies of all the reports presented by the Committees, together with the accounts from the Bathford Consolidated Charities could be found on the table near the door if people wished to take a copy away with them.
- 2.3. The Chair drew attention to the displays by village groups which had been put up around the room and she encouraged people to look at these during the coffee break.

3. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting

- 3.1. Chair Shirley Beazer reported that the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting had been signed as a true record of the proceedings at a Parish Council Meeting and had been published on the council's website. There was no objection raised from the floor with regard to the accuracy of the minutes of last year's meeting. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Diana Smith and seconded by Peter Martin.

4. Matters arising

- 4.1. There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report

- 5.1. Chair Shirley Beazer made a report covering a number of issues which had arisen during the past 12 months. The full text of the Chairman's report can be found on the parish council's website www.bathford.net or requested from the Clerk.
- 5.2. Items of particular note were the completion of new affordable housing in Mountain Wood, the closure of the post office and the successful expansion of the shop into the newsagency. The Chair announced the 12% reduction in the precept and welcomed the news that the school would be receiving funds to build a new hall. The proposals in the Regional Spatial Strategy to build thousands of homes in the Bath area and the proposals for the Park & Ride on Bathampton Meadows gave the council concerns about the erosion of the Green Belt and it had made its concerns known to B&NES and the Government Office for the South West. The Chair went on to say that the Amenities Committee had done much over the previous year to ensure the maintenance of the public spaces in the village and the Bathford Bulletin was going from strength to strength under the guidance of the new editorial team.
- 5.3. The Chairman thanked the many organisations and volunteers for all they contributed to the life of the parish.
- 5.4. The Chair reminded the meeting of the proposal to wind up Bathford Consolidated Charities as its capital value continued to decrease, notice of which had been published in The Bathford Bulletin. No objections to the proposal had been received following the notice and the Chair invited comments from the floor. No objections were made and therefore the Chair confirmed the decision to wind up the charity and transfer any remaining capital to a local charity, likely to be Dorothy House.
- 5.5. The Chairman of the Parish Hall Management Committee, Prof Darryl Almond, gave a short report on another successful year for the parish hall. The fabric remained in good condition but further improvements had been made with the fitting of new external doors. In the coming year the committee proposed to replace the flooring in the toilets and to improve facilities for the disabled. The very high use of the hall by 20 local groups and 47 one off bookings during the year meant that sufficient income was being generated and hire rates would remain unchanged for the 7th year running. Prof Almond acknowledged the work done by Anne Haworth in her role as booking secretary. The election and membership of the Parish Hall Management Committee was proposed by

Shirley Beazer and seconded by Prof Daryl Almond. The election and membership of the Committee was confirmed by a show of hands. .

6. Presentation by Beat Manager

- 6.1. PC Simon Glanfield thanked the parish council for this opportunity to introduce himself to the community as the newly appointed Beat Manager and introduced his colleagues Beth Shire and Trevor Wilmott from the Crime Reduction and Neighbourhood Watch teams respectively.
- 6.2. PC Glanfield said although Bathford was within a relatively low crime area, it was vulnerable because the roads allowed criminals quick access away from the village. PC Glanfield said that his aim was to work with communities to look at methods to improve security and one of the ways to do this might be to set up Crime Prevention Workshops every few months to provide crime prevention advice, raise awareness of crimes in the area etc.
- 6.3. Trevor Wilmott spoke about the value of the Neighbourhood Watch system in preventing and detecting crime and encouraged people to think about joining the local Neighbourhood Watch group particularly if they were aware that their road was not covered by a Neighbourhood Watch representative at the moment.
- 6.4. Beth Shire said that the Crime Reduction Team was keen to work with communities to make Bath a safe place in which to live and work and she would be pleased to hear from any groups in the village, particularly groups of older persons, who would benefit from receiving crime reduction advice. Beth invited residents to look at the leaflets and take away crime prevention marker kits which the police team had brought with them.

7. Overview Report from Amenities Committee

- 7.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the report of the Amenities Committee. The full text of the report can be found on the parish council's website or requested from the Clerk. The members of the Committee were introduced and Cllr Stan Cherry thanked them for their work during the year.
 - 7.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry announced the annual charges for use of the recreation ground and allotment rents from September 2009 would be as follows:-
 - 7.1.1.1. Rugby Club £389 per year
 - 7.1.1.2. Other sports users £127 per year
 - 7.1.1.3. Allotment full plot £14 (£7 for concessions)
 - 7.1.1.4. Allotment half plot, £7.00 (£3.50 for concessions)
 - 7.1.1.5. Water charge £3 per plot holder
- 7.2. Cllr Stan Cherry welcomed the use being made of the playing field particularly the strong youth development programmes run by the Rugby and Cricket clubs. As the rugby club had only one senior team at present, they had not made full use of the pitch and therefore a rebate of rent may be due as agreed between the club and the parish council. The cricket club had installed a secure store in the tree line at the far edge of the recreation ground and plans were being made to refurbish the pavilion. Consideration was being given to demolish the

existing building and erect a larger pavilion on the site, but these plans were in a very early stage of development.

- 7.3. It was reported that the allotments continued to be well used and Cllr Stan Cherry thanked the volunteer Allotment Wardens, Mike Smith and Martin Wright for their work in managing the allotments so effectively. All new and existing tenants had signed the new tenancy agreement and new tenants were now also paying a deposit which would be returned to them if the allotment was left in good condition at the end of their tenancy.
- 7.4. Cllr Stan Cherry reported that a number of young people in the parish had attended the parish council meeting in October 2008 asking for a recreation area for young teens as the play area did not contain equipment for older children. The creation of BMX humps on a site at the bottom of the recreation ground had been suggested, but the young people wanted somewhere to use their skateboards not bikes. Residents would be invited to give their views on this issue in the second half of this meeting.
- 7.5. Cllr Stan Cherry informed the meeting that funds were still available in the Parish Plan account for community projects and invited local groups to apply for funding when appropriate. Parish Plan funds had been used to contribute to the new stair lift in the British Legion as part of the aim to improve access around the parish for mobility impaired residents.

8. Overview Report from Planning and Environment Committee

- 8.1. Cllr Hugh Baker presented the report of the Planning and Environment Committee. The full text of the report can be found on the parish council's website or requested from the Clerk. He thanked the members of the committee for their hard work and commitment during the past 12 months.
- 8.2. A total of 36 planning applications had been considered over the year, the majority of which had been straightforward and uncontentious.
- 8.3. Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the committee had spent a considerable amount of time dealing with two issues which did not appear to have an immediate direct impact on Bathford parish, but which nevertheless gave the committee cause for concern because of the potential for erosion of the Green Belt. The first of these issues was the proposal in the Regional Spatial Strategy to build 21,000 new houses in the B&NES area in the next 20 years. The parish council had sent letters of objection to the Secretary of State, the Government Office for the South West, MPs and pressure groups.
- 8.4. The second matter of concern was the proposal to build a Park & Ride on Bathampton Meadows and here Cllr Hugh Baker thanked Steve Mackerness for the considerable amount of work he has undertaken to provide the council with information about this issue. Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the parish council had sent a number of letters voicing its strong opposition to the scheme and expressing concern about the lack of meaningful consultation and the lack of regard for local opinion.

9. Overview Report from Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

- 9.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the report of the Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee. The full text of the report can be found on the parish council's website or requested from the Clerk.
- 9.2. The meeting noted that B&NES had drawn up proposals for changes to the junction of High Street and Ashley Road, but the parish council had objected to the scheme on the grounds that they did not improve the safety of the junction and the new layout was not wide enough for agricultural vehicles. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that the council continued to request the removal of priority point 1 as part of the improvement package. It was noted that the Safe Routes to School funding had been allocated for 2009/10 and therefore improvements to this junction would have to wait until 2010/11 or beyond.
- 9.3. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that flooding on two sections of the A363 continued to be a major hazard and the council was in discussion with B&NES about rectifying these problems. The severe winter weather had significantly increased the number of potholes appearing which B&NES had been slow to repair despite repeated requests.
- 9.4. It was also reported that the parish council had asked B&NES to investigate the stretch of road from Kingsdown into the High Street to try to determine a cause for the frequent and seemingly inexplicable accidents in this area.
- 9.5. Cllr Shirley Beazer took this opportunity to remind residents of the B&NES Council Connect number 01225 394041 which can be used to report concerns about any issue including flooding, potholes, street lighting etc to the council.

10. Overview Report from Finance & Administration Committee

- 10.1. Cllr Susan Barclay presented the report of the Finance & Administration Committee. The full text of the report can be found on the parish council's website or requested from the Clerk.
- 10.2. It was noted that the council's income and expenditure for the year had met its forecasts. There were no significant projects planned for the coming year and a new budget had been set for 2009-2010 year, resulting in a decrease in the precept of 12%.
- 10.3. Cllr Susan Barclay said that the parish council continued to explore opportunities for reducing costs and had switched its telephone and internet service provider which had resulted in significant savings. No grants had been anticipated for 2009-2010 but the council would explore the possibility of grant funding if any major projects arose.

11. Overview Report from Communications Committee

- 11.1. Cllr Ian Plain presented the report of the Communications Committee. The full text of the report can be found on the parish council's website or requested from the Clerk.
- 11.2. Cllr Ian Plain reported that the Bathford Bulletin had been going for over a year in its new format and the publication continued to be well received. A small

amount of advertising was being accepted each month to offset the printing costs and this had been welcomed by advertisers and readers alike. The printers were happy to allow the size of the Bulletin to change each month, giving the editorial team the flexibility to increase or decrease the size of the Bulletin each month depending on the number of contributions and advertising.

- 11.3. During the coming year the committee would be considering the erection of a finger post in the village, at a location yet to be agreed, indicating the direction of places in the village such as the shop. The committee were also looking at an idea to move the notice board from the corner of Dovers Park to a position by the post box as it was considered that more people would see it in this location. Residents opposite the new site would be consulted.

The presentation of the Committees' reports was followed by a coffee break of 20 minutes.

12. Proposals for which written notice has been given

12.1. Suggestions for ways to improve the appearance of the parish

- 12.2. The Chair invited ideas from the floor for improving the appearance of the parish.

- 12.3. A member of the public expressed concern about the appearance of the industrial site at the bottom of Bathford Hill and asked whether the parish council had known what the site was going to look like before work was carried out. Cllr Hugh Baker said that no planning application was submitted prior to the work being done and therefore there had not been an opportunity for the council to see or comment on the plans. It had subsequently been confirmed by B&NES that the work did not require planning permission and any other necessary approvals had been obtained. It was suggested that the parish council should request some evergreen planting around the site so that it was screened in winter as well as the summer and also that closed fencing should be erected to replace the existing open wooden fencing. Cllr Hugh Baker said that the parish council could approach the owners about screening and this would be considered at a future planning committee meeting.

- 12.4. Another member of the public asked what could be done to improve the area of land by the bus stop in Dovers Park which was an eyesore. The parish council confirmed that it had no enforcement powers and had asked B&NES to consider using its enforcement powers to get the land cleaned up but without success. It was reported that a planning application had been submitted to build a house in the grounds of 11 Dovers Lane and the land would be cleared if the application received approval.

- 12.5. Two further suggestions for improvements were made. The first was to resurface The Drung which runs along the boundary of the churchyard as the existing tarmac was in poor condition. The last suggestion was to have a parish road sweeper. The parish council confirmed it had considered this option before, but it was too expensive and onerous in terms of equipment, security, health and safety considerations. It was suggested that maybe Bathford could share Batheaston's roadsweeper.

12.6. Development of play area for young people and teenagers

The Chair invited views on the issue raised earlier in the meeting for the development of a play area for young people. The council had proposed the creation of some BMX bike humps in the lower corner of the field as an inexpensive and achievable solution, but this idea had been rejected by the young people who wanted a skate park. Concern was expressed that BMX bike humps or a skate board area could be seen as exclusively for the use of boys and that girls might feel excluded. It was suggested that an alternative might be a multi-use games court that could be used for a variety of sports such as basketball, netball, tennis etc. It was acknowledged that this could be very expensive to install and may need planning permission. It was considered that grants might be available towards the costs.

12.7. Members of the public noted that the school play ground was used a lot at weekends and after school by children riding bikes and perhaps there should be a track on the playing field for bike use.

12.8. In response to the suggestion for a Boules area, Cllr Stan Cherry reported that The Crown Inn had recently installed a Pentanq court in its grounds.

12.9. Ideas for projects 2010-2011

Cllr Stan Cherry invited suggestions for any special projects that residents would like to see carried out in the parish. Cllr Stan Cherry said that suggestions could be made at this meeting or residents were welcome to approach the parish council at anytime during the coming year.

12.10. Cllr Stan Cherry reported that work was underway to produce a Bathford Community Calendar to raise funds for the village shop and if there was any village organisation which had an annual event which they would like to see printed in the calendar then they should contact him as soon as possible.

13. Open Question and Answer Session

13.1. There was an observation from a parishioner that during the recent mini-rugby tournament cars had been parked on both sides of Bathford Hill, narrowing the road to a dangerous extent. Parking problems occurred in the village but particularly in Ashley Road whenever there were matches or training on the playing field. The council acknowledged that parking was an issue, but it was only for a limited period each week during the rugby season and the council could do little if cars were legally parked. It was suggested that the council could write to the clubs using the playing field asking them to remind members to park responsibly.

13.2. A member of the public pointed out that the Chair had omitted to mention St Swithun's Church during her report of organisations which contributed to the life of the village. The Church organised many groups catering for all parts of the community including toddler groups, women's groups and youth groups. The Chair apologised for her oversight.

14. Formal Closure of Meeting

14.1. Chair Shirley Beazer thanked Margaret Hawkins and Joyce Helps for preparing the refreshments.

14.2. Cllr Stan Cherry proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair.

14.3. The meeting was formally closed at 9.20 pm.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....

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