

**Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 19 May 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 John Lloyd
Councillor Ian Plain
Councillor Jean Vesey
Cllr Richard Wickham

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. No matters were raised under this item.

2. Apologies

2.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Paul Faulkner and Cllr Keith Masdin.

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. Acceptance of the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by Cllr Hugh Baker and seconded by Cllr Stan Cherry. The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes which 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. Change of telephone and internet service provider – Cllr Ian Plain confirmed that the change over should take place within the next week or so.

5.2.2. Trailer on High Street – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that the trailer could be legally parked on the road if it had a registration plate on it, which this trailer does, but it must also be lit at night which the trailer is not. She said that the registration details had been forwarded to the police to take appropriate action.

- 5.2.3. Advertising in the Bulletin – Cllr Ian Plain reported that this matter would be covered under item 6b later in the meeting.
- 5.2.4. Tree overhanging road sign on A363 - Cllr Stan Cherry reported that he had spoken to B&NES Highways and Tree departments about this matter. The tree officer is to take this forward, but the local authority will need to identify the owner of the land before the tree can be removed.
- 5.2.5. Dog Fouling Penalty Notices – Cllr Ian Plain reported that he had not had the opportunity to speak to B&NES about erecting notices on Bathford Hill but would do so as soon as possible.
Action: Cllr Ian Plain
- 5.2.6. School Fence – Cllr Ian Plain reported that the fence should be an item for discussion at the next School Governors' Meeting as he had raised a concern about the fence on safety grounds. There was now a gap and steep slope between the level of the playground and the fence particularly where the opening for heavy goods vehicles had been closed. Children had slipped down the slope and injuries could result. He would report back to the council if corrective action was to be undertaken.
Action: Cllr Ian Plain
- 5.2.7. Instructions for use of new PA system – members considered it important that information about the new PA and loop system in the parish hall should be given to users to ensure the system was as widely used as possible. The council also considered that all the equipment should be kept on site so that it was easily accessible to users. It was suggested that making the cupboard in the hall secure would allow all the equipment to be kept on site and instructions for its use could be posted on the inside of the door. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would raise this matter with the Parish Hall Management Committee again.
Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

- 6.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for May 2008. Members noted that the Cricket Club had encountered a problem with the provision of its new store and an alternative supplier was being sought. It was also noted that the promised grant of £3,339.62 had been received from B&NES to meet around 85% of the cost of the new item of play equipment.

6.2. Communications Committee

- 6.2.1. Cllr Ian Plain reported that the new look Bulletin continued to receive favourable feedback and a change would be made to the diary page from the June edition to list the events in June and those early in the following month. A separate page listing the regular events in the parish hall with contact details would be printed in the June edition which residents could tear out and keep.
- 6.2.2. BEFA was taking the centre pages of the June edition as an alternative to inserting a separate flyer in the Bulletin to publicise a public meeting. A charge of £25.00 was to be made for the two pages which would cover the

additional cost of printing a 12 page Bulletin and was cheaper than producing a separate insert.

- 6.2.3. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that some criticism had been made of the clarity of the photograph on the front cover of the Bulletin, particularly the May edition. Cllr Ian Plain said that the picture had been a scanned image last month and the quality may have suffered. Cllr Ian Plain said that he was looking for a photograph to go on the front cover of the June edition. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had photographs of the scarecrows on the allotment and he would email a copy to Cllr Ian Plain for use this month.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

- 6.2.4. Cllr Ian Plain reported that a notice had appeared on the telephone box on Bathford Hill announcing that the box was uneconomic and would be closed after a period of public consultation. It appears that BT is closing 14,000 boxes out of a total of 60,000. The list of boxes proposed for closure in the B&NES area has not been published, but a list for Wiltshire indicates that boxes in rural locations are proposed for removal including, Farleigh Rise and South Wraxall. The public consultation period requires B&NES planning department to be notified of objections to the proposed closure. The Council agreed that it was important to retain the telephone box on Bathford Hill in case of emergency on the playing field (children may not have access to a mobile phone) and to allow services such as Childline and The Samaritans to be contacted outside the home if necessary. Anecdotal observations suggested that the box was used on a daily basis.

- 6.2.5. Cllr Ian Plain said that he had contacted Don Foster MP about this matter and it was suggested that the matter might also be raised with Councillor Loraine Brinkhurst and prospective parliamentary candidate Jacob Rees-Mogg. The Council RESOLVED to object to the removal of the telephone box on Bathford Hill and Cllr Ian Plain was asked to write to B&NES. It was also suggested that the council should object to the removal of the box from Farleigh Rise as this could be used in case of emergency in the nature reserve.

Action: Cllr Ian Plain

- 6.2.6. Cllr Shirley Beazer asked Cllr Ian Plain to provide a written committee report for future meetings.

6.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 6.3.1. Cllr Susan Barclay informed members that there was no written report this month as the F&A Committee had not met since the last parish council meeting. She introduced the following items for consideration at this meeting:-

- 6.3.2. Renewal of Insurance Policy – following the council's decision at the last meeting to add the stone bus shelter and the new piece of play equipment to the insurance schedule the revised renewal premium had increased to £1,045.87 from £1,000.55. Members agreed the quotation was reasonable and acceptance of the quote was proposed by Cllr Susan Barclay and seconded by Cllr Wendy Chambers. The Council RESOLVED to renew its

insurance policy with Allianz Cornhill from 1 June 2008 at an annual premium of £1,045.87.

6.3.3. Summary of Income and Expenditure for 2007-2008 – members noted the summary for the whole of the financial year 2007-2008

6.3.4. Annual Subscription to The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – members agreed that the benefit of SLCC membership to the Clerk and councillors was commensurate with the annual subscription for 2008-2009 of £102.00. Renewal of the subscription to SLCC was proposed by Cllr Susan Barclay and seconded by Cllr Wendy Chambers. The council RESOLVED to renew its annual membership of SLCC for 2008-2009 at a cost of £102.00.

6.4. Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

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

6.4.2. Suggestion for a pedestrian crossing on Bathford Hill – a resident had spoken to Cllr Shirley Beazer suggesting a pedestrian crossing on Bathford Hill. B&NES were not opposed to the idea in principle, but had indicated that cost was a consideration. The proposal would require a feasibility study to be carried out and council agreed that this matter could not be considered in detail until the proposals around the Ashley Road junction with the High Street had been agreed and implemented.

6.4.3. Priority Point 1 – Cllr John Lloyd expressed his concern about B&NES' refusal to remove Priority Point 1 which in his view was sited incorrectly and that a serious accident would occur there at some point in the future. He said that the sight lines up the hill were not sufficient to allow slow moving heavy vehicles to negotiate around the priority point safely and it pushed vehicles to the wrong side of the road into the path of vehicles coming down the hill or trying to turn out of Dovers Park. Members agreed with his suggestion that the parish council should write to B&NES explaining that the priority point in its current position is not working properly and is not improving road safety for the following reasons:-

- there is not a sufficient sight line for slow moving heavy vehicles travelling up the hill, including buses on this showcase bus route;
- the priority point does not slow the traffic coming down the hill;
- there is nothing to slow the traffic coming down the hill at any point from New Road;
- priority point 1 pushes traffic on to the wrong side of the road and into the path of vehicles turning out the Royal British Legion and Dovers Park.

6.4.4. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would write to B&NES expressing the council's concerns.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6.4.5. 20 mph sign – a point was raised that the flashing signs did not appear to be on long enough around the time that school started and finished. It was proposed that the ideal times for the lights to be flashing were as follows:-

- Between 8.30am to 9.30am to cover the start times of both the school and Pepperpot pre-school;
- Between 11.45am and 12.30pm to cover the end and start of the pre-school sessions at Pepperpot;
- Between 2.30pm to 3.30pm to cover the end times of both the school and Pepperpot pre-school.

6.4.6. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would write to B&NES asking for the times of the flashing lights to be adjusted accordingly.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6.4.7. Speed limit on Warleigh Lane – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that the request for a 30mph speed limit on Warleigh Lane had been refused on the grounds that there was no special reason for its speed limit to be different from any of the other lanes in the surrounding area. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that she was disappointed with the news and large vehicles continued to cause problems in the lane.

6.5. Planning and Environment Committee

6.5.1. Cllr Hugh Baker presented the Planning & Environment Committee monthly report for May 2008. The following items were discussed:-

6.5.2. Enforcement – it was noted that B&NES enforcement officers were looking at the case of the mobile home on farmland and the works being carried out on a listed building in Church Street.

6.5.3. Applications – the committee had objected in principle to the proposed new building at Westleigh Farm on the slope of Solsbury Hill.

6.5.4. Meeting with B&NES – it was reported that the meeting with planning services had been useful and it had been interesting to hear the views of a senior official from B&NES' planning services.

6.5.5. Expansion of housing in the Green Belt – the Planning Committee would be considering at its next meeting whether a letter should go to district councillors about this matter, particularly in view of the information found about how High Wycombe District Council had successfully prevented development of Greenfield sites.

7. Liaison with School Governors

7.1. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that the next meeting of the School Governors was due to take place tomorrow evening (20 May 2008) and therefore she would report to the parish council meeting in June.

8. Neighbourhood Watch

8.1. Cllr Jean Vesey thanked Cllr Stan Cherry for the considerable amount of help he had given to her in updating the record sheets relating to neighbourhood watch. Each neighbourhood watch contact person had been sent a list of residents in their patch with a request to update the records and obtain email addresses with consent for ease of distribution of alerts etc. It was hoped that

this exercise would increase coverage of neighbourhood watch and encourage more volunteers to come forward.

8.2. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that she had asked the local PCSO to talk to the users of the garages in Mountain Wood due to noise. He had reported that the garages were being rented by people living outside the parish.

8.3. Following a break-in at Warleigh in which the thief had apparently gained access to the property by reaching his arm through the cat flap, the Clerk was asked to put a note in the Bulletin reminding residents not to leave keys or other valuables within easy reach of a cat flap.

Action: Clerk

8.4. It was suggested that the PCSO should be asked to park his marked van in the area covered by the flashing 20mph speed limit signs to encourage motorists to obey the speed limit. Cllr Jean Vesey said that she would speak to the PCSO about this.

Action: Cllr Jean Vesey

9. Correspondence

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

9.2. Milestone Project – David Howells had produced an interesting folder on the completion of the milestone project a copy of which he had made available at the Annual Parish Meeting and sent an electronic copy to the parish council. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Howells thanking him for this interesting document.

Action: Clerk

9.3. Annual Parish Meeting (APM) – Cllr Shirley Beazer read out a letter of thanks from a resident congratulating the council on the effectiveness of the APM. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had received several positive comments from parishioners about the quality of the APM this year.

9.4. Somer Community Housing Trust – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that she and Cllr Hugh Baker had accepted an invitation from Somer to the opening of new houses in West Harptree in order to speak to the housing trust about ensuring that the new houses in Bathford were allocated to those with existing local connections. Within the past few days, however, members of the parish council had been invited to the opening of the new houses in Bathford and Batheaston in June and therefore the invitation to West Harptree had been declined. Councillors noted the rural exception policy which allowed affordable housing to be built on land which would not normally be available for housing if a local need for such housing could be demonstrated. Cllr Richard Wickham said that councillors attending the opening may wish to raise concerns about the 5 year residency qualifying criteria applied to those waiting for housing in a specific area. He said that many people may have had no choice but to move away from an area on grounds of affordability and therefore may be unable to satisfy the residency qualification even though they may have grown up in the village or have other connections in the area.

- 9.5. Leaflet from B&NES about Park & Ride sites – the latest leaflet from B&NES about park and ride sites around the city was noted.
- 9.6. Leaflet from B&NES about recycling – the latest leaflet from B&NES with advice about recycling, collection times and recycling facilities in the area was noted.
- 9.7. 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.

10. Items to report

10.1. The following issues were raised:-

10.2. Replacement of Stair lift at the Royal British Legion – Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had been intending to apply for a grant from Quartet towards the cost of a new stair lift in the Royal British Legion, but all grant funding had been withdrawn and therefore no money would be available from this source. He said that money was available in the parish plan account and he would bring a proposal to the next meeting of the parish council that a donation be made to the Royal British Legion towards the cost of the stairlift. The point was raised that the council must be transparent about the source of the funding and members noted that there would be an opportunity for a full debate on this issue at the next meeting.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

10.3. Sale of Whitehaven – Cllr Ian Plain reported that Whitehaven had been sold to an unknown buyer. It was suggested that the main house would be split into two properties and the outbuildings and other dwellings on the site sold as separate units. The ownership of the bridleway was an issue which the parish council would need to monitor.

10.4. Twinning – Cllr Shirley Beazer said that a group of school children from Artannes-sur-Indres were to visit in July and said that she would like to be involved in welcoming them. Cllr Jean Vesey was asked to raise this matter at the school governors meeting to get the agreement of the school to be involved in the visit and for Cllr Shirley Beazer to join them.

Action: Cllr Jean Vesey

11. Items for the Bulletin

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

11.1.1. Security alert about thieves gaining access to homes through cat flaps

11.1.2. Change to procedure with regard to complaints made about alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for councillors

11.1.3. Date of next meeting

Action: Clerk

12. Items for the next meeting

12.1. Donation towards cost of new stair lift at the Royal British Legion

12.2. Letter box and change of address for parish office following closure of Post Office.

13. Payments for approval

13.1. Payment of the invoices presented to the council was proposed by Cllr Hugh Baker and seconded by Cllr Shirley Beazer. The council RESOLVED to approve the following payments:-

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| Bathford Post Office | Rent for parish office – May 08 | £100.00 |
| The Garden Business | Tree work on allotments | £346.63 |
| GB Sport & Leisure | New play equipment | £3,928.97 |
| Corsham Print Ltd | Printing May edition of Bathford Bulletin | £87.00 |
| Bathford Parish Hall | Hire of hall for APM | £20.00 |
| Mr K Masdin | Expenses – cost of advertising banner | £52.88 |
| Mrs W Chambers | Expenses – cost of refreshments at APM | £11.68 |
| Mrs S D Beazer | Expenses – equipment for parish office | £20.68 |
| Mr R Wickham | Expenses – renewal of web hosting | £15.00 |
| Mr I Plain | Expenses – renewal of domain name | £23.76 |
| Mrs R C Holding | Clerk’s salary – April 08 | £513.49 |
| Mrs R C Holding | Clerk’s expenses, electricity | £30.00 |
| Post Office Ltd | Tax & NI | £38.23 |
| Allianz Insurance | Renewal of insurance policy 2008/09 | £1,045.87 |
| SLCC | Renewal of membership | £102.00 |

13.2. The council also gave authority to the Clerk to make arrangements for the payment of the monthly invoice from Mr R Millbank for grass cutting as soon as it was received in advance of the next meeting.

14. Date of next meeting

14.1. The next meeting will be on Monday 16 June at 7.30pm in the Parish Office.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....