

Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 19 January 2009 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 Keith Masdin
Councillor Richard Wickham

Also Present: 3 Members of the public (2 for item 1 only and 1 for items 1 to 7e)
Steve Mackerness - co-opted member of Planning Committee
(Items 7c to 7e)
Ruth Holding (Clerk)

1. Public Five Minutes

- 1.1. Bathford Transition Group Presentation – Jennifer Hall and Emma Jackson thanked the council for the opportunity to talk about plans to create an official Transition Group in Bathford to address at a local level the issues of climate change and a reduction in the dependency on oil. The group was looking for support from the council for the work of this group which they suggested could take the form, for example, of requesting edible planting or hedging where appropriate when considering planning applications. Members confirmed that the parish council already promoted local consumption and local production wherever possible and suggested that it would be helpful to see a checklist of items that they could be doing with regard to this matter if one was available. Information was submitted to the parish council with regard to environmental issues from local and central government from time to time and the council said it would be happy to share information which might be of interest with the Transition Group.
- 1.2. The council confirmed its support in principle for the transition initiative and said that it would continue to reinforce its support for keeping businesses and consumption local. The council noted that the Transition Group would be holding another public meeting at the end of January and wished them success with their aims. The Council thanked Jennifer and Emma for seeking the council's views and looked forward to hearing more about progress on this matter.

2. Apologies

- 2.1. Apologies were received from Cllrs Paul Faulkner, Ian Plain and Jean Vesey and Ward Councillor Gabriel Batt.

3. Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

- 3.1. The Chair called for any declarations of interest. Cllr Stan Cherry declared a non-prejudicial interest in the item about the future of the cricket pavilion as Hon. President and life member of the cricket club.

4. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 21 April 2008

- 4.1. Acceptance of the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting was proposed by Cllr Hugh Baker and seconded by Cllr Stan Cherry. The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes which were signed by the Chair as a true record of proceedings.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

- 5.1. 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 signed by the Chair as a true record of proceedings.

6. Matters Arising

- 6.1. Councillors reviewed the list of actions arising from the last meeting and confirmed where action was complete.

- 6.2. The following matters arising were discussed:-

- 6.2.1. Meeting about BMX Project – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that a meeting with young people and their parents had been arranged for 28 January in the parish hall. Several councillors had confirmed their attendance at the meeting and all were welcome to attend.

- 6.2.2. Meeting of the school governors – Cllr Keith Masdin confirmed that he would attend a meeting of the school governors with Cllr Jean Vesey at the next opportunity.

Action: Cllrs Jean Vesey and Keith Masdin

- 6.2.3. Visit to other play areas – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that he had seen the play areas in Marshfield and Box and would speak about this in more detail under item 7a.

- 6.2.4. Cost of replacing school fence – Cllr Keith Masdin said that he had been given an estimate of £10-15,000 to replace the boundary fence. This issue would be discussed further under item 7d.

7. Committee Reports

7.1. Amenities Committee

- 7.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for January 2009. The following items were discussed:-

- 7.1.2. Tree Disease – it had been reported in a television news item that there was a disease of horse chestnut trees sweeping the south west and it was suggested that the council would be advised to have the trees on the

bridleway checked. The council agreed and Cllr Stan Cherry said he would contact the tree officer at BANES for advice and a survey.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

7.1.3. BMX project – Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had seen the big BMX track at Marshfield, which was too ambitious in size, and he had also visited the modest dirt track humps in Box park which he thought could be a model for a similar area in Bathford. Box parish council had asked young people and their parents for their ideas and funded the cost of the agreed track which had taken the form of a number of dirt humps which were then seeded. The parents and young people had done most of the work to create the track. With regard to risk management, the council had only been required to put up a notice stating the track was used at users own risk and that safety equipment should be worn. It was not known whether there had been any claims made against Box parish council.

7.1.4. Cllr Stan Cherry said that there had been little negative feedback to the proposal for a BMX project in Bathford apart from concern about numbers of young people gathering in the area. The Guides had been worried that they might lose the area used for cook-outs in the summer. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had spoken to the Guide leader and confirmed that an area would be left for the Guides' use.

7.1.5. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would report progress at the next meeting and that he intended to put something about the proposals in the March edition of the Bathford Bulletin.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

7.1.6. New cricket pavilion – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the Amenities Committee and other councillors had held a useful meeting with members of the Cricket Club (CC) about the future of the pavilion. The CC was amenable to suggestions made by the parish council about the building and appeared ready to undertake fundraising. The CC had also indicated its willingness to amend its constitution to ensure that if the club folded at any time the pavilion would pass to the control of the parish council.

7.1.7. At a separate meeting of the Amenities Committee and other councillors it was agreed that, if the council was to make a financial contribution to the project, the best option would be to give ownership of the building to the CC for a peppercorn rent and the CC would be responsible for all future maintenance costs, payment of utility bills etc.

7.1.8. The CC hoped to have designs for the new building available for consideration at the March council meeting and these plans could also be displayed at the Annual Parish Meeting in April. The current building and lean-to covered a total area of 31 sq metres. The new pavilion would probably cover a larger area and its orientation would be changed so that it faced the cricket square.

7.1.9. There was discussion about whether the parish council should make a financial contribution to this project. Some members were of the view that the CC should raise the full cost themselves while other councillors

considered that the project represented a cost effective way of enhancing facilities in the parish and would bring indirect benefits such as fostering community spirit.

- 7.1.10. Members agreed that further work was required before a decision could be made about the level of the parish council's financial contribution to this project. Cllr John Lloyd proposed and Cllr Hugh Baker seconded a proposal to take this project to the design stage. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the result was 6 votes for and 2 abstentions. The council RESOLVED to take this project forward.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

- 7.1.11. Ways to improve the appearance of the parish – it was agreed to defer this item and put it on the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting in April 2009.

Action: Clerk

7.2. Communications Committee

- 7.2.1. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee this item was deferred to the next meeting. Members of the Communications Committee agreed to contact the Chair to arrange a date for a meeting as one had not been held for some time.

Action: Members of the Communications Committee

7.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 7.3.1. Precept for 2009 -10 – Cllr Susan Barclay confirmed that the committee had met in November to agree the council's budget for 2009-2010 and this had been circulated to all councillors following the meeting. No amendments had been proposed. It was reported that 3% had been used as the inflationary figure and assumptions had been made about the level of VAT recovery and advertising revenue from the Bathford Bulletin. Based on the figures shown the precept would be £19,764.00 which was a decrease of 9.90% on last year's figure.

- 7.3.2. It was noted that money was being held in the council's reserves for projects such as the well capping and also traffic calming which was dependent on B&NES. It was suggested that a note should be added to the budget sheet to indicate that the money was held in reserves pending completion of the projects.

Action: Clerk

- 7.3.3. Cllr Wendy Chambers proposed and Cllr Stan Cherry seconded acceptance of the budget for 2009 -2010. Council RESOLVED unanimously to set a precept of £19,764.00 for 2009 -2010. The Clerk was asked to complete the necessary paperwork.

Action: Clerk

- 7.3.4. Financial Support to St Swithun's PCC for churchyard maintenance – The Council considered the PCC's request for money towards maintaining the churchyard. The PCC had carried out a large project in 2008 to replace the metal fence at the boundary of the churchyard and also proposed to lay a new path from the lych gate to the church door in 2009. The parish council considered that it should limit its funding to the cost of grass cutting and

associated maintaining of the machinery. Cllr Hugh Baker proposed and Cllr Susan Barclay seconded a proposal to make a donation of £300.00 to St Swithun's PCC towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard. A vote was taken by a show of hands and council RESOLVED unanimously, in accordance with its powers regarding the maintenance of burial grounds, to make a payment to St Swithun's PCC of £300.00.

Action: Clerk

- 7.3.5. Members further agreed to consider the donation for next financial year much earlier in the year at its meeting in April or May 2009.

Action: Clerk

- 7.3.6. Freedom of Information Act approval of publication scheme – members noted that the council was required to adopt the model publication scheme issued by the Information Commissioner's Office from 1 January 2009. The council already had a publication scheme and made documents available on the website or upon request. The Clerk was asked to check the council's current practice against the model scheme to ensure full compliance.

Action: Clerk

- 7.3.7. Appointment of Internal Auditor – The Council RESOLVED to appoint Vince Parker, Accountant, as its Internal Auditor for the Annual Accounts 2008 - 2009.

- 7.3.8. Replacement of photocopier – the Clerk had not received a quote prior to the meeting and therefore this item was deferred.

7.4. Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

- 7.4.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the Highways, Footpaths and Lighting (HFL) Committee monthly report for January 2009. The following items were discussed:-

- 7.4.2. Potholes – Cllr Shirley Beazer said that numerous potholes and the damage to the tarmac in the area in front of the cottages by the shop had been reported to B&NES for repair.

- 7.4.3. Fly tipping – the rubbish left in the woods on the road to Kingsdown had been reported to B&NES for disposal.

- 7.4.4. Wall around Crown Field – a member reported that part of the wall alongside the pavement appeared to be missing. Cllr Shirley Beazer said she would check the damage and report it to the land owners as appropriate.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 7.4.5. Fallen tree on Warleigh Lane – Cllr Wendy Chambers reported that an oak tree had fallen across the lane preventing access but had been cleared relatively quickly.

- 7.4.6. New bus stop in Dovers Park – The council noted the letter of support from a resident for a bus stop at the top of the Dovers Park loop. Members agreed to seek the views of residents living around the Dovers Park loop and nearby areas about the proposal for a new bus stop, and to get an idea of how many

people would use it. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would prepare a questionnaire for distribution.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 7.4.7. School Fence – members noted the letter from the Property Services team at B&NES which indicated that the fence was not a priority for capital funding at present. The council considered that they should continue to press B&NES on this issue and take up the offer of a site meeting with members of the Property Services and Schools Capital Team. The Clerk was asked to write to B&NES with suggested times and dates for a meeting.

Action: Clerk

7.5. Planning and Environment Committee

- 7.5.1. Cllr Hugh Baker presented the Planning & Environment Committee monthly report for January 2009. The following items were discussed:-
- 7.5.2. Eastern Park & Ride site – Cllr Hugh Baker invited Steve Mackerness, co-opted member of the Planning & Environment Committee, to speak on this issue. At its last meeting the council had taken the view, based on the response to the questionnaire in the Bathford Bulletin, that that it reluctantly accepted that B&NES would be unlikely to adopt an alternative site for the development, and the role of the council should be to continue to fight to minimise the impact of the development.
- 7.5.3. Steve Mackerness said he understood why the council had reached the conclusion it had at its last meeting because Bathford was not directly affected by the development to the extent that the neighbouring parishes were. However, he suggested that the council should continue its support for the neighbouring parishes in which 80%-85% of residents who expressed a view were opposed to the development on the meadows. It would not be unreasonable for Bathford Parish Council to oppose the site on the grounds of protection of the greenbelt. There was also good evidence to suggest that the P&R would not reduce pollution, cut the number of vehicles on the road or improve bus journey times. A good, cost effective, alternative site was available at Charmy Down which would overcome many of the difficulties presented by the chosen site on the meadows.
- 7.5.4. All councillors had seen the statement approved by the Planning & Environment Committee which set out the reasons, as presented and discussed at this meeting, why the council was opposed to the P & R at Bathampton Meadows. The full council endorsed the contents of the statement.
- 7.5.5. Steve Mackerness said that he would be happy to speak at future council meetings as the time for submission of the full planning applications approached and give advice on correspondence from the parish council to B&NES on this issue.
- 7.5.6. Jewson View Farm – it was reported that the farm was under new ownership and more activity may be planned for the site.

- 7.5.7. Lavington's Yard – it was reported that a resident had written to the council complaining about the noise from the site. Members suggested that as they had no direct powers to intervene the complainant should be advised to contact environmental services. There was also concern that material was encroaching on to the green field area of the site. Cllr Hugh Baker said that he would reply to the resident and contact the enforcement officer about these matters.

Action: Cllr Hugh Baker

8. Planning for the Annual Parish Meeting 20 April 2009

- 8.1. Members noted that the proposed date for the Parish Cluster Meeting involving Bathford was Thursday 5 February 2009 at the Rhymes Pavilion, Batheaston. The start time was to be confirmed

9. Liaison with School Governors

- 9.1. There were no matters to report.

10. Neighbourhood Watch

- 10.1. It was reported that a new page had been set up on the parish council's website containing information and alerts from the police and the Neighbourhood Watch team. It was also noted that a new Beat Manager had been appointed. The Clerk was asked to put a note in the Bulletin about both these items.

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. Heritage Events – the leaflet published by B&NES about heritage events taking place from January to April 2009 was noted. Copies were placed in the shop.
- 11.3. Joint Waste Core Strategy for the West of England – members noted the preferred options report published for public consultation and that a 'drop-in' event would be held on 23 February in the Guildhall. Details to be put on the website.
- 11.4. Flood Risk Management Calendar – members noted the calendar published by the Environment Agency containing advice and information to help reduce the impact of flooding.

12. Items to report

- 12.1. The following issues were raised:-
- 12.2. Bathford Consolidated Charities – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the current Trustees of the Charity were considering whether it should be wound up in view of the small capital value of the investment and the very little money that this generated for distribution in the parish. The Charity Commission had advised that the charity could be wound up and any monies given to other charities with the same aims as the original bequests. The Clerk was asked to put a note in the Bulletin inviting comments from parishioners on the proposal to wind up the charity.

Action: Clerk

12.3. Annual Return to Charity Commission – members confirmed they had each received a copy of the annual return to the Charity Commissioners with regard to income and expenditure for the Wynne Wilson Recreation Ground.

12.4. Overgrown Vegetation – the Clerk was asked to write to a resident on High Street asking them to cut back the ivy growing over a wall which was causing inconvenience to people walking on the pavement.

Action: Clerk

13. Items for the Bulletin

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

13.1.1. Proposal to wind up Bathford Consolidated Charities

13.1.2. Details of new police Beat Manager

13.1.3. Names of parish councillors

13.1.4. Date of Annual Parish Meeting

13.1.5. Waste Management Public Consultation

13.1.6. Date of next meeting.

Action: Clerk

14. Items for the next meeting

14.1. Planning for Annual Parish Meeting

15. Payments for approval

15.1. Members noted that a number of invoices had been received after the November meeting which could not wait until this meeting for payment and these had been approved by two councillors on 15 December 2008.

Corsham Print Ltd	Printing Bathford Bulletin December 2008	£120.00
The Phone Co-op	Internet and phone charges	£30.82
David Lord	Refund of allotment rent paid in error	£25.00
The Garden Business	Cutting of allotment central path	£146.87
Mike Smith	Reimburse cost of skip on allotments	£175.00
R Millbank	Maintenance on Village Green	£90.00
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's expenses – petty cash, electricity for office	£40.00
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary – November 2008	£585.42
HM Revenue & Customs	Tax & NI	£67.61

15.2. Payment of the invoices presented to the council at this meeting was proposed by Cllr Hugh Baker and seconded by Cllr Richard Wickham. The council RESOLVED to make the following payments:-

I M Suleman	Rent for parish office – Jan 2009	£100.00
Corsham Print Ltd	Printing Bathford Bulletin January 2009	£87.00
The Phone Co-op	Internet and phone charges	£29.65
EDF Energy	Street Lighting	£3.41
EDF Energy	Electricity for Manor Basement	£14.23
Mr R J Woodbury	Mole catching service on playing field	£135.00
R J Sully & Son	Hedgecutting and manure for allotments	£161.00
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's expenses – petty cash, electricity for office	£60.00
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary – December 08	£462.72

Page 8 of 9

16. Date of next meeting

16.1. The next meeting will be on Monday 16 February 2009 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office.

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....