

**Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 21 June 2010 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Bathford**

Present: Councillor Stan Cherry (Chair)
Councillor Hugh Baker
Councillor Susan Barclay
Councillor John Lloyd
Councillor Ian Plain
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)
Jamie Colston (for part of item 6)
John Malone (for part of item 6)

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. There were no matters raised under this item

2. Apologies

2.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Shirley Beazer, Cllr Wendy Chambers, Cllr Paul Faulkner, Cllr Keith Masdin and Ward Councillor Gabriel Batt.

3. Declaration of interests 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 item 7c ii as the compiler of the Bathford Community Calendar.

4. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting (17 May 2010)

4.1. The following amendments to the minutes of the last meeting had been requested:

- 4.1.1. paragraph 4.3 Cllr Wendy Chambers name to be added to the list of members of the Communications Committee;
- 4.1.2. paragraph 10.3.3 the word 'contact' to be amended to read 'contract';
- 4.1.3. paragraph 10.3.6 the word 'rent' to be inserted after the word ' office' in the first sentence.

4.2. Acceptance of the minutes of the last meeting, as amended, was proposed by Cllr Hugh Baker and seconded by Cllr Ian Plain. The Council RESOLVED to accept the amended minutes which were 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. Tariff for allotment water – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that he could find no reference to an agricultural water tariff on the Wessex Water website. Cllr Hugh Baker said that he would speak to the local vineyard owner for advice about tariffs applicable to water used for agricultural purposes.

Action: Cllr Hugh Baker

5.2.2. New planter on the village green – there had been many favourable comments about the new plant container which had been placed on the village green by the bus shelter. Cllr Jean Vesey said that a resident had asked her if further containers could be put in other areas of the parish. Cllr Stan Cherry said that in view of the level of interest the parish council might like to develop this idea into a special project. Idea to be discussed at next meeting.

Action: Clerk

6. Energy Saving and Carbon Reduction Initiatives in the parish

6.1. Cllr Stan Cherry thanked Jamie Colston and John Malone for accepting the council's invitation to speak to them about the work being done with regard to potential sustainable energy projects in Bathford.

6.2. Jamie Colston outlined the work that The Cooperative movement was doing as part of its 'Greener Together' campaign. Bathford Enterprise for All (BEFA) was one of 50 Cooperative shops that had won a grant as part of an initiative to assess the levels of carbon reduction that could be achieved in communities through households making small behavioural changes. The project would run for 6 months at the end of which data would be collected to assess the impact of the changes.

6.3. John Malone reminded the parish council that the Transition Bathford group had been formed a couple of years ago and a number of awareness raising events had been held in the village since then to get residents thinking about energy reduction initiatives and sustainable energy for the community. Work was now being done to examine some of the issues raised in more detail. Two groups of interested residents were looking at the issues of solar photovoltaic (PV) energy production and wind power to assess whether a renewable energy source might be introduced into the community. As part of the review, the PV group had carried out an assessment of roofs in the parish and had identified 20 roofs of sufficient size and orientation (south facing) making them suitable for PV energy production. The next stage would be to approach the owners of the buildings and make a more detailed assessment of specific sites. Work would also be done to determine whether such projects would provide an economic return.

6.4. At the end of the presentations, the Chair invited questions from councillors. Councillors were very interested to learn about the work which was going on, but had concerns that it might be difficult to get planning approval for PV cells on buildings in or near to the conservation area and AONB. The geography of

the parish meant that roofs were highly visible and both PV cells and wind turbines were visually intrusive. Jamie Colston said that different types of PV systems were being developed, including PV tiles which were less intrusive than the large black PV panels.

- 6.5. With regard to the financing of any community energy project, John Malone explained that people would be invited to invest in the project and there would be a return on their investment. The tariffs for selling energy had been increased to make returns more favourable, but more work had to be done on the potential for any local projects to generate a reasonable return and the structure of how the returns would be reallocated to the community was still to be discussed.
- 6.6. The discussion moved to wind power and concerns about the visual intrusion and noise nuisance. John Malone said wind energy was the most commercially viable of the sustainable energy options, but the turbines were costly and the topography of Bathford made finding a suitable site difficult. BANES had identified 14 sites in the authority's area as potential sites for wind turbines. In response to a query, Jamie Colston explained that wind turbines required foundations of around 4-5 metres and the turbine was sited on a disc of 15m in diameter by 2 metres depth. When the turbine was decommissioned this pad could be removed and the area returned to its former condition.
- 6.7. With regard to the Greener Together project, councillors were invited to sign up as individuals but also as members of the parish council as one of the aims of the campaign was to gain support from the community. There was no cost involved in participating in the campaign and minimal time commitment; participants would be asked to make small changes such as not driving for a day, turning off lights, use electricity monitors etc.
- 6.8. Jamie Colston and John Malone were invited to keep the parish council informed of any developments in work being done with regard to sustainable energy projects in the parish via email to the Clerk.
- 6.9. Cllr Stan Cherry thanked Jamie Colston and John Malone for their informative presentation and helpful question and answer session. They then left the meeting and the parish council continued its discussion.
- 6.10. With regard to signing up to the Greener Together project, members agreed that this should be the choice of individual councillors. Any councillors wishing to participate in the Cooperative's study were asked to contact Jamie Colston direct to register their interest.
Action: All Councillors
- 6.11. Members noted that the parish council had also been invited to join the energy saving trust's online forum 'Green Communities' which would give the parish council access to free information, advice and training about sustainable energy. The service was free to join. Members agreed that it would be useful to have access to this on-line service and Cllr Ian Plain proposed that the parish council should sign up. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Susan Barclay. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the council RESOLVED unanimously to

join the 'Green Communities' online forum. The Clerk was asked to sign up on behalf of the council.

Action: Clerk

7. Committee Reports

7.1. Amenities Committee

7.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for June 2010. The following items were discussed:-

7.1.2. Drop-off bus stop on Dovers Park loop – members agreed that they should continue to lobby B&NES and the bus company for a simple drop-off stop in this location, and rejected the bus company's statement that a bus box must be painted on the road before the drop-off service could begin. There were many examples of stops operating on the route of the No.13 bus and on other routes across the city where there was no bus box or raised kerbs. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would ride the No13 bus route to confirm how many stops currently operated without a bus box. The Clerk was asked to draft a letter to B&NES restating the council's request for a drop off service to be introduced for a trial period.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry & the Clerk

7.1.3. Registration of land around the pound wall – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that further information had been obtained from the Land Registry and that he would obtain advice from a property lawyer about the possibility of registering the land as a village green and registering the land in the parish council's ownership at the same time. It was noted that there may be cost for the legal advice.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

7.1.4. Items for Amenities Committee – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the Basketball system would be discussed at the next committee meeting as Avonvale Rugby Club had indicated that they may be interested in making a contribution to the installation of a larger concrete pad which could be used for winter training. A resident had also approached him about the provision of an petanque court on the playing field and this issue would also be considered at the next committee meeting

Action: Amenities Committee

7.1.5. Scarecrow competition – due to the low number of entries to the allotment scarecrow competition this year, it had been suggested that the parish council might like to consider extending the competition to make it a parish-wide event. Members liked the idea and remitted it to the Amenities Committee for further discussion. The Amenities committee was also asked to consider the idea put forward that there should be a single large bonfire site set aside on the allotments for the benefit of allotment holders only to be lit on or around 5 November. This would provide a service to allotment holders and reduce complaints about the nuisance caused by individual bonfires being lit on the allotment as plot holders clear their plots at the end of the growing season.

Action: Amenities Committee

- 7.1.6. Reinstatement of Mill Whistle – a petition organised by a resident in protest at the cancellation of the 7.30am Mill Whistle has attracted a great deal of support and this had been sent to the Mill with a request for the whistle to be reinstated. The Mill had asked the parish council to approach B&NES Environmental Health with regard to the reinstatement of the whistle. Cllr Stan Cherry reported that he had contacted the Environmental Health Officer, but they had no remit to be involved as the whistle did not breach any environmental health legislation. The Clerk was asked to draft a letter to the paper mill referring to the petition and requesting the reinstatement of the 7.30am whistle.

Action: Clerk

7.2. Communications Committee

- 7.2.1. The Communications Committee was asked to consider ideas for getting the notice board in Dovers Park refurbished in the absence of a volunteer to undertake the work.

Action: Communications Committee

- 7.2.2. Members noted that the school had issued a letter to parents which appeared to indicate that the school was unhappy with the interest shown by the community with regard to the wider use of the school hall by village organisations. It was agreed that the parish council should allow the school time to get used to its new facilities and set up policies and procedures relating to the use of the hall by outside bodies before making any further approaches to them about community use.

7.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 7.3.1. Cllr Susan Barclay presented the F&A Committee monthly report for June 2010. The following items were discussed:-

- 7.3.2. Draft Complaints Procedure – Cllr Susan Barclay reported that the committee had reviewed the proposed procedure and considered that there should be an additional step introduced to allow any complaint to be passed to the relevant committee for consideration. Manuscript changes would be marked on the draft which would be returned to the Clerk for amendment. Full council would then be asked to formally endorse the revised procedure which would form part of the Standing Orders.

Action: Cllr Susan Barclay

- 7.3.3. Alternative venue for parish council meetings – in view of the school's concerns about community use of the building in the short term, it was agreed that there should be no approach to them about the use of the new hall for parish council meetings. The F&A Committee would look again at the use of the Community Rooms for meetings for a trial period from September and report to the next meeting of the parish council.

Action: F&A Committee

- 7.3.4. Street Lighting – the Clerk confirmed that she had contacted EON about switching suppliers following information published in the ALCA Newsletter, but had yet to receive a reply.

- 7.3.5. Approval of Annual Return 2009-2010 - 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.
- 7.3.6. 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.
- 7.3.7. The Council noted the Annual Internal Audit Report to the Council in Section 4 of the Annual Return.
- 7.3.8. Cllr Stan Cherry proposed and Cllr Susan Barclay seconded approval of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2010. 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 2010. Section 1 was signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair.
- 7.3.9. The Annual governance statement in Section 2 was signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair.
- 7.3.10. The Clerk was asked to submit the Annual Return to the external auditors by the deadline of 14 July 2010.
Action: Clerk
- 7.3.11. Request for donation to Bathford Community Calendar 2011 – members noted that the Community Calendar 2010 had been popular and had raised a significant sum for the village shop which operated as a cooperative for the benefit of the community. Cllr Stan Cherry that the production costs would be lower than last year due in part to a smaller print run of around 300 calendars. Last years production costs had been met in full by sponsorship from local businesses and individuals although the same level of contributions could not be guaranteed as at least one business had closed in the past 12 months. Members agreed that a modest contribution from the parish plan fund towards production costs of the calendar would be an appropriate way for the council to show its support for the community shop. Cllr Susan Barclay proposed a donation of £50 from parish plan funds. This was seconded by Cllr Jean Vesey. A vote was taken by a show of hands and by a result of 6 votes for and 1 abstention the council RESOLVED to make a donation of £50.00.
Action: Clerk
- 7.3.12. Request for donation to Bathford Summer Festival – members noted the information from the festival organising committee listing the events planned during the festival fortnight in July 2010. The council was impressed by the number of events taking place and that every group and organisation in the parish appeared to be involved. Members acknowledged that there were expenses associated with staging the festival and that it was the intention of the organisers to offer as many free events as possible to enable all residents to enjoy the festival activities.

7.3.13. Councillors considered that a donation from parish plan funds sufficient to cover start-up costs this year and kick-start the festival for 2011, while allowing the organising committee the opportunity to hold its own fundraising events to help to finance the festival in 2011 and beyond, would be an appropriate use of parish plan funds for the wider benefit of the community. Cllr Richard Wickham proposed a donation of £500.00 towards the costs of staging of the festival over 2 years in 2010 and 2011, subject to the parish council receiving a breakdown of festival income and expenditure as soon as the accounts had been prepared. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Hugh Baker. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the council RESOLVED unanimously to make a donation of £500.00 towards the cost of staging the Bathford Festival in 2010 and 2011.

Action: Clerk

7.3.14. Trial Use of Community Rooms for Council Meetings – this matter was discussed earlier in the meeting. See paragraph 7.3.3 above.

7.4. Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

7.4.1. The report for June 2010 was noted. The Clerk was asked to bring the following items to the attention of the Chair of the Committee for follow-up with B&NES:-

7.4.2. Junction markings – the markings at the junction of the A363 and Bathford Hill were almost worn away and required repainting

7.4.3. Overgrown vegetation – vegetation on the left hand side of the bridge going out of the village was very overgrown and needed to be cut back.

7.4.4. Safety of Pedestrians – concern was expressed about the danger to pedestrians walking on the narrow pavement under the bridge if a vehicle was to hit the kerb. It was suggested that safety railings should be considered to separate pedestrians from the road vehicles.

Action: Clerk

7.5. Planning and Environment Committee

7.5.1. Cllr Hugh Baker presented the Planning and Environment Committee monthly report for June 2010. The following items were discussed:-

7.5.2. Planning Decisions – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that B&NES was proposing possible changes in the way that planning decisions were made which would reduce the number of applications going to the Development and Control Committee for determination. Furthermore a parish council's comments on any planning application would be disregarded for the purposes of determining the application if the comments did not refer to specific planning policy guidelines to support the comments. Cllr Hugh Baker said that this would have the effect of discriminating against parish councils who did not have planning experts on their committees. A meeting of B&NES officials and parish councils was to be held on 23 June. Bathford's views would be represented by the Clerk of Combe Hay parish council as places were limited. The outcome of the meeting would be reported in due course.

7.5.3. Valley Parishes Alliance (VPA) – an event to announce the launch of the group was due to take place at lunchtime on 21 June. Any news of interest about the launch or other VPA activities would be reported at the next meeting.

8. Neighbourhood Watch

8.1. It was reported that there had been an attempt to break into a vehicle parked on Bathford Hill resulting in a broken window. As this crime was similar to a number of incidents which had occurred in the area the police were treating these crimes collectively as a major incident to enable more resources to be targeted at solving the problem.

9. Liaison with School Governors

9.1. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that she had approached Somer Community Housing Trust about the school's need to raise funds to replace the remainder of the boundary fence and Somer had agreed to make a donation of £200.00, which would be paid directly to the school, on the grounds that a new fence would enhance the setting of the sheltered accommodation in Mountain Wood. The Clerk was asked to write to the school informing them of the involvement of Cllr Jean Vesey in securing this donation.

Action: Clerk

10. Correspondence

10.1. Cllr Stan Cherry reported the following correspondence issued on behalf of the council or received by the council:-

10.2. Sustainability – members noted the appointment of a Community Sustainability Officer for B&NES and the first edition of the *Sustainability Matters* newsletter. The Clerk was asked to send a copy to Jamie Colston for information.

Action: Clerk

10.3. School Hall Open Day – members noted the note from the school confirming that an open day would be held in September 2010.

10.4. Regular letter from police – members noted the latest newsletter from the Chief Superintendent.

10.5. BTCV – members noted the information received from BTC with regard to the voluntary help that BTCV could provide to support local conservation projects.

10.6. Norton Radstock – members noted that a local poll was being held in that area to allow residents to decide how they wanted to be governed at a local level.

10.7. Bathford Baptist Chapel – the parish council had been invited to attend a meeting on 30 June being held to discuss the future of the chapel. The Clerk was asked to circulate a copy to all councillors and ask if any one was available to attend the meeting on behalf of the parish council.

Action: Clerk

10.8. Flood Awareness Event – members noted that B&NES had arranged a drop in event on 29 June 2010 for any residents looking for information and advice about flood prevention etc.

10.9. Unkempt land in Dovers Park – members noted the response from B&NES confirming that they would not be pursuing any legal action with regard to the untidy land in Dovers Park. Councillors were disappointed that their efforts to get this land cleared had not been supported by B&NES. The Clerk was asked to publish the response from B&NES in the Bathford Bulletin so that residents were aware of the efforts made and the position adopted by B&NES.

Action: Clerk

11. Items to report

11.1. Unkempt land in Dovers Park – it was suggested that the parish council could approach the landowner with an offer to break up the concrete and level the ground. It was agreed that the letter would need careful wording to ensure that no future liability transferred to the council. The Clerk was asked to prepare a draft.

Action: Clerk

12. Items for the Bulletin

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

12.1.1. B&NES decision with regard to unkempt land in Dovers Park

12.1.2. Village of the Year competition - reminder to keep parish tidy

12.1.3. Information about the No Cold Caller Stickers being distributed with the July edition of the Bulletin

12.1.4. Date of next meeting

Action: Clerk

13. Items for the next meeting

13.1. Funding for Youth Services

13.2. Special project – plant containers to improve appearance of the parish

13.3. Fund raising for school fence

14. Payments for approval

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

I M Suleman	Office rent June 2010-paid by standing order	£106.00
St Swithun's PCC	Contribution for churchyard maintenance	£300.00
Tree Parts Ltd	Tree surgery on Jubilee Trees	£499.38
Corsham Print Ltd	Printing June edition of Bathford Bulletin	£120.00
Valley Parishes Alliance	Annual Subscription to VPA	£150.00
The Phone Coop Ltd	Phone and Internet charges May 2010	£29.02
R Millbank	Grass Cutting	£350.99
Stan Cherry	Vouchers for allotment competition prizes	£70.00
Keith Masdin	Planter/contents for display on village green	£43.96
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary May 2010	£500.81

The following payments were agreed to be made from the Parish Plan Funds:-

Bathford Summer Festival	Donation towards costs of staging festival	£500.00
BEFA	Donation towards cost of Community Calendar	£50.00

15. Date of next meeting

15.1. The next meeting will be held on Monday 19 July 2010 at 7.30pm in the parish office

The meeting closed at 9.54pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....