

**Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of Bathford Parish Council
held on Wednesday 8 September 2010 at 6.30pm in the Parish Office, 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 Ian Plain
Councillor Jean Vesey

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)

1. Apologies

1.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Paul Faulkner and Richard Wickham.

2. Proposal for spend to obtain a valuation from the District Valuer of land for sale by the river in the parish of Bathford

2.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had called an extraordinary meeting of the full council as an opportunity had arisen for the parish council to seek to acquire an area of land by the river. The initial step in the process required the council to obtain a valuation of the land by the District Valuer and the purpose of the meeting was to consider whether the parish council should pay the valuation fee and obtain a valuation.

2.2. A summary of the parish council's financial position as of 5 August 2010 was tabled. It was noted that the council had sufficient reserves to meet its commitments and could comfortably afford the valuation fee which was estimated at £750. The outcome of the valuation would determine whether the parish council could afford to pursue the option of purchasing the land.

2.3. Cllr John Lloyd said that the proposed sale represented a one off opportunity for the parish council to acquire land which would be preserved in perpetuity for the benefit of the residents of Bathford. The site was a pleasant spot alongside the river and its purchase would allow the land to be used as a village amenity. It would also include the pound wall which was a special feature in the village but had been gradually eroded over the years. If the parish council acquired the land then in time the wall could be consolidated and repaired.

2.4. It was acknowledged that if the parish council acquired the land it would bring ongoing maintenance responsibilities etc.

- 2.5. Concern was expressed that the parish council could spend a significant sum on the land, and there were doubts about how much it would be used. Access was difficult across the main road. The money might be better spent on a project which would benefit more residents. It was suggested that residents should be asked for their views before a decision was made.
- 2.6. Councillors were invited to comment. Most agreed that the area would provide a nice riverside amenity for residents. It was reported that a lot of use was currently made of the land as a launching site by canoeists, boat users and by young people as a place to play and swim. The Bathford Transition Group may have a use for the land and volunteer groups such as BTCV might provide voluntary labour to clear the site and rebuild the pound wall.
- 2.7. It was also noted that if the land was acquired by the parish council it would protect the area from inappropriate occupancy and development by travellers and other groups.
- 2.8. There was some discussion about the auction particulars.
- 2.9. Councillors considered whether parishioners should be asked for their views on the proposal to obtain a valuation before any instructing the District Valuer to carry out the valuation. There was little general support for a survey of residents before the valuation was obtained, but all councillors agreed that the residents should be consulted if after obtaining the valuation it was considered worthwhile seeking to acquire the land.
- 2.10. Cllr Keith Masdin proposed that a note should go out to all residents prior to the valuation being obtained asking whether they agreed that the parish council should obtain a valuation from the District Valuer for a fee of up to £750. This was seconded by Cllr Wendy Chambers. A vote was taken by a show of hands the result of which was 2 votes for and 7 against and therefore the proposal was not agreed.
- 2.11. Cllr John Lloyd proposed that the parish council should obtain a valuation from the District Valuer of the land by the river for an estimated fee of £750. This was seconded by Cllr Hugh Baker. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the council RESOLVED unanimously to obtain the valuation.
- 2.12. Cllr Stan Cherry was asked to contact the District Valuer and ask them to carry out the valuation as soon as possible and before the next meeting of the parish council on 20 September 2010.
Action: Cllr Stan Cherry
- 2.13. Councillors were reminded that the valuation was commercially sensitive and when the valuation figure arrived it **must not be disclosed** to anyone outside the council.
- 2.14. The matter would be put on the agenda for further discussion at the next parish council meeting on 20 September 2010.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

Signed..... (Chair)

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Date.....

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