

BROAD HINTON AND WINTERBOURNE BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

In the Broad Hinton Village Hall,
Tuesday 6 July 2021, 7.30pm

MINUTES

Councillors: Cllr Alex LaRoche (AL) (Chairman)
Present: Cllr Adrian Smith (AS) (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Jim Gunter (JG)
Cllr Candace Gaisford (CG)
Cllr Damian Le Gresley (DL)
Cllr Adam Gilmore (AG)
Cllr Louise Skillen (LS)

Cllr Allison Bucknell (AB) (Wiltshire Council)

Apologies: None

Peter Barry (PB) (Clerk)

1. Introduction, Quorum & Declaration of Interests

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting. The Meeting was declared quorate. Cllr Le Gresley declared an interest in planning application PL/2021/04206.

2. Councillor Resignations

Cllr Adrian Smith, Vice Chairman had announced his decision to resign following this meeting and the Chairman gave him enormous thanks for all his hard work, integrity, and support on behalf of the whole Council and the residents of the Parish. His wise counsel would be sorely missed by all.

Cllr Smith responded by saying that he had enjoyed his time on the Council and he felt it was in good shape.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting held on 11 May 2021

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting held on 11 May 2021 were considered and approved.

The Clerk also provided hard copies of all the remote meetings held in 2020 and the Chairman signed these off.

4. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising that would not be subsequently discussed in the meeting

5. Finance Update

As previously the Clerk summarised the finances, with separate sheets showing all Income for the period, as well as all expenditure. The Bank balances were also shown and the Meeting gave the Clerk the authority to transfer £1,000 from the General Deposit account to the Defibrillator

Deposit Account. This would not show on any bank statement but was merely an internal adjustment to ensure funds were available in the Defibrillator account when needed.

PC Bank Account Balances - as of 1 July 2021:

Current Account: £162.10

Deposit Account (Total): £16,223.78 made up of

Deposit Account (General): £12,601.82

Deposit Account (Allotments): £2,281.96

Deposit Account (Defibrillators): £1,340.00

6. Planning

The Chairman gave an overview of the planning applications that had been received and the decisions made since the last meeting. These are given below:

PL/2021/03121 Stickle Tarn, Manor Farm Lane, Broad Hinton.

Full Planning Application proposed for construction of a rear single storey extension with glass lantern in flat roof sections. No objection. Agreed by Wilts.

PL/2021/03777 Land at 35 High Street, Winterbourne Bassett.

Outline Planning Application proposed for the erection of a single detached residential dwelling. Objection. Refused by Wilts.

PL/2021/04206 4 Fox Row, Winterbourne Bassett.

Full Planning Application proposed for demolition of conservatory, relocation of greenhouse, new single storey rear extension and associated works. No objection. Agreed by Wilts.

7. Highways & Maintenance

A4361. The Chairman opened the discussion on the A 4361 by expressing disappointment at the lack of any progress on the subject of safety on the road, which was this Council's main concern. The problem of safety and excessive speed had also not been adequately addressed, with the Atkins study – for which we had assisting in paying – merely recommending the status quo. The meeting with Councillor Wayman had produced nothing in the way of any new initiatives and it was all very disappointing.

JG stated that he had been given an assurance that when we changed from the Marlborough CATG Meeting to the Royal Wootton Bassett, we would not be disadvantaged and our requests would be moved across to a similar position at the RWB Meeting. This had clearly not happened as the A4361 issues had been demoted from top priority on Marlborough CATG to sixth in RWB.

AB stated that in order to achieve real progress, we needed to identify a tangible problem, which could be addressed and a solution found. Merely complaining about speed would not help, as we were not in a position to randomly alter speed limits on a major trunk road. Any requests for changes of this nature would need to be addressed in conjunction with the police. AS recommended the Chairman write to the Chief Executive of Wiltshire Council and also Danny Kruger our MP as this subject was clearly going nowhere at present. He had met with the police and after a good conversation, he had already seen more police presence in the layby close to the WB turn. CG stated that she too had been in communication with the police and had made contact with Jane Vaughan, who was now our link.

JG stated that the next CATG meeting was in September and that he would endeavour to formulate a new plan in time for this meeting.

Uffcott and Earthline. AG updated the meeting on events since the last meeting. There were two strands of events in regards to Earthline. These were:

- The Planning appeal lodged by Earthline would likely be considered in October. There wasn't a great deal that could be achieved before this area was resolved.
- The TRO limiting the axle weight was also currently on hold until the outcome of the Planning appeal had been resolved. Wiltshire Council were concerned that a TRO now would likely be subject to legal challenge. AG stated that Natasha Gumbrell had replaced Richard Broadhead and that Ken Oliver is taking over the byway TRO case. AG would remain in close contact and monitor events as we moved forward.

Buses. AB stated that central government had provided extra funding for buses, but in our area it was difficult to see how matters could be improved. The routes were already extremely long which meant they were often delayed and sending large buses into small villages wouldn't be popular.

LS stated that with Stagecoach being the only provider and with them being a commercial company, it was difficult to see how things could be improved dramatically. She stated that a small improvement would be for the current buses that ran along the main road and which terminated in the bus station in Swindon, to run on to the railway station and a later bus from Swindon be added to the timetable. The meeting thought this a sensible adjustment and LS was asked to write to AB formally with this request.....**Action: LS**
It was noted that in Broad Town a system of 'bookable taxis' was in place and this was proving popular. LS agreed to investigate this and report back.....**Action: LS**

8. Footpaths and Maintenance

Road Signs. The following matters were discussed:

Summers Lane. CG reported that there was no update available on the Summers Lane sign.

Footpath Sign by Village Hall. CG reported that as requested she had been in touch with Martin Heal who had quoted the sum of £240.00 for the provision of two Footpath signs – one by the Village Hall and the second which is currently in a very poor state of repair in the church car park by BH church.

The Meeting felt that two quotations should be produced to comply with policy and to ensure best value for money in this area. The clerk stated that he had spoken to Robert Fitzpatrick, who would be happy to quote for the provision of this type of sign. The Clerk was tasked to obtain a quote from Robert Fitzpatrick and link with CG. The meeting agreed to go ahead with the lowest quote once they had been received.....**Action: PB**

Footpaths. CG reported on the need for a footpath running across the green area by Pitchens End. At present a path had been worn in the grass and in wet weather this was becoming difficult to manage. CG stated that the idea of a plastic mesh type overlay on the grass was supported

by Wiltshire Council, who had recommended that the Parish Council may wish to take ownership of the land. The Parish Council was hesitant to take ownership of the land as it would mean that the council would be liable for the upkeep and other expenses that had not been budgeted for. Nevertheless the Council would very much value this installation. DL recommended that this become part of the Neighbourhood Plan. CG agreed to progress this with Wiltshire Council

CG also stated that the collapsed fence between the Pitchens End green area and Post Office Lane had been picked up by Wiltshire Highways who acknowledged responsibility.

In regards to footpaths in our area, JG reported that James Horton had cut three paths through his crops which were shown as existing on the Walking map and he wished publicly to thank James. This was certainly a step in the right direction.

JG also thought that publishing the Walking map on our website would be excellent guidance for all walkers from the villages. JG was asked to liaise with AG to achieve this. **Action: JG & AG**

Verge Cutting. The problem of excessive growth of the verges in the area was discussed. As last year, the height of the grass at the junctions with the A 4361 had made turning out onto the main road extremely dangerous and as last year, the council had turned to self help to rectify this problem. The Clerk had put in a request onto the MyWilts web site and Wiltshire Council had since mown the junctions properly.

The Clerk had received a letter from Wiltshire Council explaining that this year they did not intend to cut the verges as it was planned to see if this 're-wilding' would assist in the growth of wild flowers on the verges. Wiltshire council planned to mow only in September.

The Meeting felt that the Council should take a proactive approach and take responsibility particularly for the site lines to ensure the safety of the junctions and will investigate finding a contractor who could mow the site lines at the junctions with the main road in May of each year. LS and the Clerk were tasked to investigate.....**Action: LS & PB**

DL mentioned that he had noted a number of Ash trees in WB that had been marked for felling and he wondered who was responsible for this. AB stated that Wiltshire Council were undertaking this in response to the danger posed by Ash die back. AB agreed to ensure the Parish Steward made contact with the Clerk to ensure this type of information is passed down in a timely fashion. *(Clerk Note: The Clerk met with the Parish Steward on Thursday 8 July and both agreed to remain in closer touch).*

9. Emergency Planning

Covid-19. In light of the hoped for ending of 'life ruled by the pandemic', the Chairman stated the following: - As most adults are vaccinated, we now look towards July 19th 'Freedom Day', we reflect on the last 18 months and have realised that we will have to live with this virus and life will never be the same again. We will all need to rely on our common sense to keep safe in the future.

Emergency Planning. JG opened the discussion on the refresh of our Emergency Plan by outlining the seven areas for which he is currently responsible:

- Flood
- Snow
- Major Accidents – road, air

- Utilities failure – water, electricity, phone, broadband
- Major fire
- Pandemics – human and animal
- Drought or other environmental disaster (JG would prefer to keep this one)

He stated that although he would be very happy to remain as the overall coordinator, he would recommend the setting up of a sub-committee to consider the various aspects of the required updates to the emergency plan. The Flood section is the most comprehensive after being updated in 2019.

The Chairman was in total agreement and suggested that an Emergency Plan sub-committee be set up and the meeting agreed. The Chairman also suggested that the Emergency Plan sub-committee was combined with the Climate Change work to be discussed later in the meeting. DL was not keen but AS said he had seen other councils combining the two under an Environment and Sustainability sub-committee. It was recommended that outside personnel should also be involved and that an advert should be placed on both village Facebook pages asking for volunteers to join. In particular the Chairman recommended that farmers should be involved, as they frequently owned the equipment needed to deal with an emergency.

JG stated that each of the seven headings needed a lead but he was happy to be the overall coordinator. DL said would be happy to review the current Emergency plan which dated back to 2014 and suggest some sections that could be quickly updated if the Clerk had time.

JG agreed to work with DL on a strategy to take this matter forward**Action: DL & JG**

Flooding. LS volunteered to take the lead on the subject of Flooding and JG agreed to assist in handing over the details.....**Action: LS & JG**

In regards to flooding, JG outlined the special problem associated with the chalk villages. Almost without exception the drains in these villages were old and unable to cope with the quantity of water now frequently being deposited and the Wiltshire Flood team were aware of the shortcomings but have not to date agreed to do anything about it. AB asked JG to forward her more details on this subject and she would look into it.....**Action: JG**

All agreed that a special meeting was needed to get this off the ground in an ordered fashion and the Clerk was tasked to find a date that was suitable to all and to ensure that prior to the first meeting, all the necessary preliminary work had been done.....**Action: PB**

10. Issues and Action Log

The Chairman went through the list of outstanding actions, and the following had been achieved:

- Balancing Pond. There had been no action on this subject and it remained an area of concern.
- Pollarding Tree at Pitchens End. Wiltshire Council had agreed to undertake the necessary pollarding and a TPO had been submitted .
- Present consolidated list of data to be held by Clerk on behalf of the Council. This action was still ongoing with support from DL and AG
- CATG Operating System. Chairman to ensure we receive all the necessary CATG information from RWB area. JG to remain as point of contact. Ongoing.
- Pitchen End Street Lights. JG to discover from Wiltshire Council when work on the lights would start. This was August 2021. Action closed.

- Speeding on A 4361. CG to speak to Andrew Jack of Wiltshire Council on whole subject of speeding on A 4361. This had occurred as reported. Action closed.
- Footpath sign by Village Hall. CG to speak to Martin Heal about the possibility of a Footpath sign to replace broken one by Village Hall. This had occurred as reported. Action closed.
- Footpaths. JG to undertake a survey of footpaths in Parish area and Chairman to speak to James Horton concerning blocked footpaths on his land. This had occurred as reported. Action closed.
- Dog Signs. CG to furnish DL with anti dog fouling sign and DL to erect on entrance to track off A 3461 to Ridgeway. This had occurred and the action could be closed.

The Clerk would be sending out an amended Action list once the Minutes had been agreed.

.....**Action: PB**

11. Re-Allocation of Councillors Responsibilities

In light of the next two items on the Agenda the Chairman asked if this subject could be dealt with later.

12. Neighbourhood Plan

AG opened the discussion on this subject, by giving some background to the subject, which had been introduced by the Localism Act of 2011. He felt a Working Group should be set up to answer three key questions:

- What would be the benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan for our parish?
- What would be the costs/risks/issues of producing one?
- Would the working group recommend creating one and if so, how would we proceed?

The Working Group would need to consult widely, talking to other Parish Councils as well as Wiltshire Council. It would need to gather as much information as possible and then decide if the effort was worthwhile.

DL stated that in his view, this could help address a number of individual items recently being considered such as suitable locations for new housing, traffic / speeding problems and environmental strategy. It would be essential to involve as many residents as possible. He recommended that the Working Group aim for a deadline of the time when next year's precept would need to be considered.

AS stated that in that vein, costs and proportionality would need to be considered and a proper cost/benefit analysis undertaken. This topic had been looked at a few years ago and the costs were thought to be too high. He was however keen to be involved as a non-councillor if it did go ahead.

AG agreed to lead on this and to link with the Clerk to set up a meeting to consider the way ahead. This would need to be a different meeting to the Emergency Planning Meeting, but coordination would be essential.....**Action: AG & PB**

The Chairman stated that ideally there should be reps from BH, WB and UF on this working group and she would speak to James Keith to try and get him involved.....**Action: Chairman**

13. Climate Change Policy

DL reported that he had attended a presentation by Wiltshire Council, where the whole subject of climate change and how councils should approach this subject, was discussed. A number of specific subjects were covered and these included:

- Housing and associated planning policy and building standards – certainly Number 1 on the list.
- Transport – it was appreciated that in a rural community it was hard to avoid the use of private cars.
- Hedges/ Verges/ Green Spaces – the balance between supporting wildlife and road safety
- Farming – the main use of land in Wiltshire

DL felt that as a Parish Council we needed to be seen to be doing our bit and not just talking about it. We needed a statement of intent and an overarching policy and climate strategy should be a standing item on future agendas. As a start he suggested we link with Marlborough who were well advanced in this area. The Clerk was tasked to contact the Marlborough Town Council clerk and obtain a copy of their statement of intent relating to the Wiltshire Climate Strategy for DL to use as a starting point.....**Action: PB & DL**

The Chairman concurred with all that DL had said on this subject and agreed that this should be a standing item on each Agenda.

14. Re-Allocation of Councillors Responsibilities

In light of the two items discussed above a considerable number of new responsibilities had potentially been added to each Councillor. It was agreed that this could not be finalised at this meeting and the Clerk would coordinate the actions from each. One particular item – that of Bank signatory was discussed and it was agreed that this would be formally agreed that DL should take on this task. The Clerk would need to contact Lloyds Bank and arrange change if signatures as agreed.

.....**Action: PB**

It was also agreed that the Job Specification for a Councillor would most likely need re-wording and re-casting. AG, DL and the Clerk were tasked to look into this.....**Action: AG; DL; PB**

15. Correspondence from Residents

Letters had been received from two residents – one in BH and the other in WB. A number of separate subjects were mentioned in both letters and these are addressed below:

Speeding. The speed of traffic in the whole area of responsibility was a concern and this would be addressed in detail in the Neighbourhood Plan. The council was not of a mind to act on a single resident's letter and would need to survey the whole parish on the subject of village speed limits.

Boundary Changes. The Parish council had spent a great deal of effort and expense in countering the proposed change of our council from Marlborough to Royal Wootton Bassett in 2019. A large number of well thought out documents were provided, but in the end our concerns were ignored. The present change concerns parliamentary election boundaries and any individual can comment directly to their MP or respond to the boundary commission consultation. It was not felt appropriate for the Parish council to become involved with this subject.

Weight Limit of Vehicles travelling through Villages. Unless there is a weak bridge on any of the routes through villages, AB advised that the Parish council is not in a position to dictate in this area.

Contact with MoD Lyneham. There was no immediate evidence of MoD personnel coming through the villages and it was not thought appropriate to dictate where people were allowed to drive.

Farmers Vehicles. Again farming vehicles are licenced to use the roads and we are not in a position to start dictating where vehicles may or may not drive.

Road Closing. The idea of closing any road is outside the scope of the parish council's powers.

DL and the Clerk were tasked to put together responses to both letters.....**Action: DL & PB**

16. Allotments

JG stated that there was nothing new to present in regards to the running of the allotments. The new committee had met and had agreed to consider the fence repairs once all Covid restrictions had been lifted. Although James Horton had offered to help with fencing, the new committee has decided to do it themselves using concrete posts. There was still no action in regards to the committee opening its own bank account. JG agreed to chivvy the committee on this subject and Contact James Horton to thank him for his offer.....**Action: JG**

14. Clerk's Old Laptop

CG and the Clerk were to present the Clerk's old laptop to the BH primary school during next week. The meeting tasked them to enquire if other unused laptops would be useful to the school.

15. Any Other Business

AS Farewell. AS stated that as this was to be his last meeting he would like to thank all for their continued work and in particular AB for the proactive way she was interacting with the council. He requested that his name be taken off the email list and website. His resignation would now be notified formally to Wiltshire Council.

Salt Bins. CG stated that she had undertaken an audit of all the salt bins in our area in readiness for next winter. This had been undertaken in conjunction with Wiltshire Council.

Dates of Next Meeting. The next meeting would take place on 7 September 2021 starting at 7.30pm in the BH Village Hall.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 10.00pm