

BLEADON PARISH COUNCIL

www.bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk

Bruce Poole BA (Hons) FSLCC MMC

Parish Clerk & RFO

Mobile 07453 358318

parishclerk@bleadonparishcouncil.co.uk



Rooftop

10 South Street

Burnham-On-Sea

Somerset TA8 1BS

Public Session

Cllr Sheppard introduced herself and explained that in the Chairman's absence she would be chairing the meeting. She welcomed members of the public's involvement, views and opinions.

The few comments centred on questioning what it was all about – had come to find out what it's all about.

Minutes of a Meeting of Bleadon Parish council held on the 26th April 2022. The meeting commenced at **7.00pm** when the following business was transacted:

Present Vice-Chair Cllr Mary Sheppard with Councillors Huw Boyce, Mrs I.D Clarke, Ann Davis, Graham Getty, Kirsten Hemingway and Rob Tyson.

In addition there were nine members of the public present.

352.1 To receive Apologies for Absence and to approve the reasons give 9LGA 1972 s85 (1)

Councillors Sara Garrett, Gill Williams, District Cllr Terry Porter and Parish Clerk Bruce Poole

352.2 Declarations of Interests

None.

352.3 To consider the potential impact on the village of Bleadon from the North Somerset Local

Consultation Draft Plan and its preferred options 2038

Cllr Getty explained that the proposals are very important for the whole of North Somerset but he had particularly looked at the areas that will affect Bleadon. The first being 'Renewable Energy' – the proposals are wide ranging with a vast amount of our Parish down for surveying for Solar Panels and Wind Power – his personal opinion was that villages and Parishioners should not be put at the sharp end of such plans. **Fossil fuels should still be used until renewable energy is fully up to speed**".

Cllr Sheppard requested that we commence the screen presentation so that the residents could see the recommendations.

We noted the complexity of how such plans were made and that we (BPC) are a statutory consultee and as such local planning authorities are legally required to consult with us before reaching a decision.

We noted that the mapping included all sorts of topics but not farming.

'Energy Crisis' – NSC trying to address.

Mineral layer nothing highlighted for Bleadon. We noted that there is a Fracking Licence stretching from W-s-M to Minehead – a few years ago fracking licence owners were approaching residents of Roman Road seeking permission to start exploring on their land. After a public meeting BPC made Bleadon a 'Fracking Free Zone'. Being so near Hinkley Point might well prevent fracking-taking place.

'NSC Renewable Search Area' - Plan proposes that wind turbines and solar arrays will be supported in principle within search area. Can be renewed at end of life if replaced with same or larger capacities. Just about the whole of Bleadon is shown carpeted with solar panels and wind turbines. We agreed that roof solar panel should be encouraged and supported.

We remembered that in 2013 NSC refused a planning application for 32,000 solar panels covering five fields and an appeal was dismissed. We noted that these fields have not been coloured 'pink' and we wondered why.

'Green Belt' - To protect land all in north east bordering Bristol, so overspill jumps over to W-s-M /Bleadon. NSC under a duty to cooperate with neighbours - mandated by Government to build 2,000 houses, possibly more. If quota not reached anything progressing to an Appeal loses its chance of succeeding.

'Strategic Gap' - Can be used to protect the setting and character of a settlement. Both Hutton and Locking have a strategic gap protecting them - why can they be protected and not us? We saw the importance of the need for a strategic gap as once we go beyond Hillcote we have linked up with Weston.

'Local Green Spaces' - We agreed nothing allocated for Bleadon.

'Retail' - We agreed nothing allocated for Bleadon.

'Air Travel Safety' - We noted that Bristol Airport have just won an appeal which includes enabling them to operate a rolling annual cap of 4,000 night flights between 11.30pm – 6.30am with no seasonal restrictions – not sure if this includes the maintenance flights. Unable to ascertain whether maintenance depot is in Cardiff or whether planes travel over Bleadon on route.

'Transport' - Nothing specific highlighted. New bus routes recently implemented - an increase in buses going through Bleadon had been observed.

We may need to be mindful in regard to NSC introducing Traffic Regulation Orders to restrict access to certain rural roads as they did without consultation in Yatton last year. It caused such an outcry that they were withdrawn four days later. We discussed the pro and cons of such an order.

'Community Facilities' - None highlighted.

'Employment Sites' - None highlighted.

We noted that 'The Quarry' application included six two-storey employment units.

'Settlement Boundary' - The Boundary near Pun Way had been tweaked to include the fourteen dwellings. We discussed - the need to accept it and that the wording in relation to settlement boundaries should not further weaken the concept and that the principle should mean something. Celia Dring had confirmed that NSC was 2000 down on its housing allocation so even if there is a settlement boundary under certain circumstances to fulfil the quota they will/can build outside the boundary - affordable housing can be built against a settlement boundary.

We acknowledged that Bleadon must be careful to keep its identity as a tight settlement maintaining its ruralness and the ecological aspect.

Cllr Sheppard was asked if there was any feedback from Campus event she had attended. She informed us that a Neighbourhood Development Plan had been discussed and that Celia Dring was not in favour of proceeding with NDP's as too costly and the Government making frequent changes means frequent changes from the top down. Cllr Boyce said that he had attended a NSC Zoom meeting a short while ago and it also came across that NDP's were not a good idea or viable with changes being made all the time causing them to become redundant.

Cllr Sheppard explained that the meeting had been called to discuss and agree a response to the Preferred Option Plan and that the presentation was hopefully a help to both Councillors and Parishioners. She also hoped that it would help Parishioners to submit comments and encouraged them to do so.

We discussed a range of topics and concerns in which questions, views and opinions were sought from the attending parishioners which included: - Is fracking likely to happen in Bleadon – at present there is a ban in place on all fracking – vibrations might affect Hinkley Point and might act as a preventative to fracking in local areas. – Food Security – where are we going to get the land for food – real concern expressed that farmers are being encouraged with financial rewards to sell land or diversify. - Can we say an outright no to Solar Panels - perhaps best to barter with a more realistic approach – ‘that it is too big a cover for an area the size of Bleadon’. - Solar development at Wick very successful in generating energy – providing incomes to vulnerable households who cannot afford fuel costs – do we need to have solar areas to develop energy?

From our constructive discussions we agreed that the main thrust of our submission response to the Consultation should be:

- Renewable energy important to Bleadon however, so is food security. Carpeting approach to solar panels and wind farms should be removed from plan.

- Aim to Develop and maintain a Strategic Gap to protect our diverse wild life, rural and farming heritage and culture and character. We recognised that once beyond Hillcote we have linked up with Weston One of the two fields opposite Hillcote which was part of the refused development application falls within Weston’s boundary –so they are the decision makers if a re-application is made.

- Maintain present settlement boundary - changes would create difficulties in objecting to possible future developments.

Cllr Sheppard ascertained whether every one was happy with the outcome and we agreed that the discussions had been informative, positive and productive.

Cllr Sheppard gave her thanks to members and parishioners for their contributions, to Jo-Gower Crane for presenting NSC Plan and in his absence Scott Morris for his help in opening the Hall and room and setting up and packing up the equipment.

Members thanked Cllr Sheppard for setting this meeting up.

Minutes constructed by Cllr. Mrs I D Clarke

352.4 Date and Time of next meeting - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – 7.00pm Monday 9th May 2022