



# BLEADON PARISH COUNCIL

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30<sup>th</sup> August 2023

**MEETING:** Newsletter Working Group.

**DATE & TIME:** Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7pm.

**LOCATION:** Church Rooms, Coronation Road, Bleadon BS24 0PG.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Parish Councillors Jo Gower-Crane, Mary Sheppard and ID Clarke  
Les Masters and Gill Williams  
(Other interested members of the public)

## AGENDA

**To elect a chairman**

**To receive apologies for absence**

**To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item**

**Matters for Consideration (page 2)**

- Terms of Reference
- Findings From the Consultation on the Future of the Bleadon Newsletter.
- Practical Arrangements for the Next Newsletter

**Date of next meeting and note any suggested agenda items – TBD**

*Craig Bolt*  
Clerk to the Council

## **Bleadon Village Newsletter**

### **Parish Clerk's Report**

#### **Newsletter Working Group Terms of Reference**

The core rationale for the working group is to make recommendations to the Parish Council, regarding the future of the Bleadon Village Newsletter.

The working group is not part of the formal decision-making process of the Council, but it has been agreed that the Parish Clerk will attend initial meetings of working groups to help members understand their rights and responsibilities and how their recommendations might feed into the statutory processes of the Council.

Suggested Terms of Reference for the Working Group are attached at Appendix 1.

#### **Recommendation**

Working Group members are invited to endorse the Terms of Reference at Appendix 1 or suggest modifications for consideration by the Parish Council.

#### **Findings From the Consultation on the Future of the Newsletter**

A summary report is attached at Appendix 2. Fifty responses (out of 1,200 residents) were received during the consultation period (i.e. 4%). There are a number of issues/themes which can be drawn from the feedback:

- People value the Newsletter – and many value it in its current form.
- Generally, people feel that the Council has 'got it right' in terms of the frequency of the publication.
- Whilst there were a number of helpful suggestions in relation to mitigating costs e.g. some people were happy to receive electronic copies, with the option to have a hard copy, there would still likely be a significant cost to the Council in maintaining the current arrangements (or something close to the current arrangements).

There are, effectively, only three means by which the cost to the Council can be reduced:

- Reducing the number of times a year the newsletter is produced
- Significantly reducing the number of hard copies of the newsletter
- Increasing the amount of advertising

The limited consultation feedback does not appear to support the first two options and advertising income is already relatively generous relative to the costs of producing each edition. It may, therefore, be more appropriate for the Parish Council to accept that there is an ongoing desire for a newsletter (with the associated cost) but look to use the newsletter as a more effective tool for communicating the future

plans of the Parish Council and inviting feedback. To-date, the role of the Parish Council has been fairly passive in relation to the newsletter, in that the organisation of the content of the newsletter and editorial control has been outsourced and with the exception of a small number of articles from serving councillors, the main role of the Parish Council has been in relation to invoicing and making payments. This is in no way a criticism of the past arrangements, but as a principle moving forward, the Council may want to consider whether – as the body paying for the Newsletter – it should be more involved in the editorial content of the Newsletter.

**Recommendation:**

Members are invited to consider the summary report at Appendix 2, debate the issue arising and make such recommendations to the Council as they see fit.

**Practical Arrangements for the Next Newsletter**

Regrettably, the editor of the Newsletter has resigned due to other work pressures. This leaves a gap in relation to the work to be undertaken for the next Newsletter. The next edition of the Newsletter would normally be in September. However, there is currently no immediate solution to this issue and an October edition would seem a more realistic proposal than one in September. The options for co-ordinating the production of the next Newsletter would seem to be:

- The Parish Clerk is asked to undertake this task.
- A volunteer from the local community is identified.
- The Council commissions an external editor.



# Bleadon Parish Council Newsletter Working Group

## **1.0 Authority**

1.1. The Newsletter Working Group is constituted as a working group to support Bleadon Parish Council (BPC). Its terms of reference are set out as below, as approved by the full Council, and subject to amendment at future Council meetings. Its authority is limited to making recommendations and undertaking actions resolved by the full Council. It therefore has the option not to meet in public.

1.2. The Group is authorised by the full council to invite BPC councillors, employees, contractors, or members of the public, if it considers this necessary to discharge its duties.

## **2. Overall Purpose/Function**

2.1. The purpose of the working group is to advise BPC on future arrangements regarding the production and dissemination of the Bleadon Village Newsletter.

2.2. The group will make recommendations to BPC for consideration and resolution and will act on the Council's behalf when authorised through resolutions agreed at Council meetings.

## **3. Duties & Responsibilities**

3.1. To consider the outcomes of consultation exercises in relation to the BPC funded newsletter and make recommendations for change to the full Council.

3.2. To make recommendations to the Council in relation to the production and dissemination of the newsletter, including – but not limited to:

- Canvassing for content
- The process for appointing editors
- Limits on advertising and advertising income

3,3 Undertaking any other related activities on behalf of the Parish Council.

## **4. Membership/Attendance/Quorum**

4.1. The core members of the Group shall include three members of the Parish Council.

4.2. Non-councillors may be appointed.

4.3. There is no quorum requirement, but all recommendations shall be referred to full council for any decision.

## **5. Frequency and Administration of Meetings**

5.1. The Group will agree its own meeting schedule if required, will publish an agenda and will inform the Parish Clerk of any outcomes.

5.2. The notes of the meeting shall be presented to the next available full Council meeting. Any recommendations for decisions will be presented to the Council in writing in the usual way for inclusion on the agenda.