

BLEADON PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk to the Parish Council

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Minutes of the meeting of Bleadon Parish Council held in the Coronation Hall, Bleadon, which commenced at 7.30pm on Monday 13th March 2017 when the following business was transacted.

Present: Councillors Claire Gutsell (Chair), I D Clarke (Vice Chair), David Chinn, Morag Edwards, Peter Gibbon, Steve Hartree, Mary Sheppard and the clerk Tony Jay.

District Cllr Terry Porter. PCSO Aisha Mitchell.

293.1 To receive any apologies for non-attendance

No apologies were received

293.2 To receive any declarations of interest in items on this agenda

No declarations were received

293.3 To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 13th February 2017

It was unanimously resolved to approve the minutes.

The minutes were signed by the Chair as being a correct record of the meeting.

293.4 To invite public participation

i) Members of the public

It was reported that speeding is still taking place in the village. The speedwatch team will be operating soon after training has taken place which is in the pipeline. Those who are concerned about speeding are asked to volunteer to join the speedwatch team.

i) District Councillor

Cllr Porter offered his congratulations to those who have opposed the large planning appeal which was recently turned down on landscaping grounds, not sustainability.

The NSC officer's email stating that NSC would be taking over all maintenance responsibilities for the closed churchyard at Bleadon, and his subsequent withdrawal of the offer were discussed at length.

This will have serious financial consequences for the Parish Council, as the contractor who cuts the grass in the churchyard was informed that his services may no longer be required when the email was received. The Clerk felt that it was only fair to inform him of the change as soon as possible. Now that he has been asked to continue he has reassessed his fees, involving a substantial increase in cost to the Parish Council.

Cllr Porter confirmed that the NSC officer had acted without authority when he made the decision contained in his original email, which the Clerk read to the meeting.

'It appears that although we may not wish to take on the liability we have no option now having a copy of the order for closure. Who do I need to meet with to look at the required maintenance issues at the churchyard'.

The NSC officer has apologised for his mistake, and offered one free cut of the churchyard grass as compensation. The Parish Council noted the apology, and the fact that compensation had been offered, but they felt that the level of compensation was wholly inadequate in the circumstances.

It was resolved that the Clerk should write to the NSC chief executive strongly complaining about the written actions of the NSC officer in question, and the fact that his written actions will result in the Parish Council undertaking additional expenditure. The NSC officer was acting on behalf of NSC when he sent his email, and therefore NSC will be asked to stand by the decision in his original email, and take responsibility for his actions, reconsidering their decision not to take over the maintenance of the churchyard, or to give adequate compensation (5 in favour, 2 against).

It was resolved to agree to increase the payment to the current contractor for his grass cutting services in the village during 2017

from his 2016 figure of £2,900 to £3,500 in line with his request. His contract for future years will be discussed when the NSC decision regarding the maintenance of the closed churchyard is received. (6 in favour, 1 abstention)

iii) Police

PCSO Aisha Mitchell presented the Police report. She stated that she was the new PCSO for Bleadon. She will be displaying posters saying when she will next be on patrol in the village. This will be advertised in the next edition of Bleadon news.

Between 13.2.17 and 13.3.17 15 phone calls were received from the Parish, mainly concerning traffic issues. 1 crime of harassment was reported.

The Police continue to conduct evening patrols in the Parish to deter rural crime and provide reassurance to residents making them feel safe and secure.

With the warmer weather approaching, residents are reminded to be vigilant and to take extra steps to protect their property when out and about, ensuring that windows and doors are locked and secured.

293.5 To receive the Clerk's report.

Two requests have been received for the car park to be closed whilst events are held. These are:

A request from the organising committee of Bleadon May Fayre for the closure from 6pm on 30th April until 6pm on 1st May.

A request from the Friends of Bleadon Church for the closure on 8th July for a midsummer picnic.

It was unanimously resolved to approve both requests

The appointment of the internal auditor was discussed.

It was unanimously resolved to approach Terry Lewis and ask if he would be prepared to carry out the internal audit at the end of the financial year.

The Coronation Hall management committee have decided that the telephone and broadband in the hall are no longer required. The Clerk has contacted BT and asked them to remove these services.

293.6 Exchange of information between Councillors.

The community payback team will be operating in Bleadon on Sunday 19th March. Cllr Chinn is organising the facilities and the removal of the green waste.

293.7 To receive an update from the Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee regarding the position of Village Ranger.

The Finance and Personnel Committee have met regarding this issue. The job specification prepared for the previous Village Ranger was discussed and is considered to be still valid. The Chair will produce adverts for the position to be placed on the local notice boards and in the post office. Applications will be invited from both self-employed people (who perform a similar role elsewhere) or from people willing to be employed by the Council.

Cllr ID Clarke is making enquiries into whether a Village Ranger needs to be CRB checked.

293.8 To consider whether the Parish Council should make a contribution to the Coronation Hall management committee for the heating and lighting costs incurred during the use of the hall for Parish Council meetings

It was unanimously resolved to give a donation of £150 for the whole of 2017/18 which will be paid in April 2017.

293.9 To receive an update from the Chairman of the planning meeting regarding decisions made during the last planning meeting.

An update was provided. (*Please see the minutes of the planning meeting*).

293.10 To consider appointing another councillor to the Planning Committee.

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Cllr Mary Sheppard to the planning committee.

293.11 To receive an update regarding the Churchyard walls.

The architect Quentin Alder has confirmed that the contract with the contractor will be signed shortly, and the work is due to commence on 20th March

293.12 To consider the implications of the decision by NSC to take over the maintenance responsibilities for the closed Bleadon churchyard.

Please see the minute 293.4 (ii)

293.13 To receive an update following the meeting with Marshalls on 8th March.

A very positive meeting took place with Marshalls. It was clear that they are prepared to listen to public concerns, and will make changes to their operating practices where possible and appropriate. Marshalls will be providing written responses to all of the questions put to them. This has not been received yet, but will be circulated when received.

The next meeting with Marshalls will be held on 7th June 2017 at 10.00am at Marshall's depot.

293.14 To consider the proposal from NSC to install double lines at the junction of Bridge Road and the A370.

It was unanimously resolved to support the installation of the lines.

293.15 To agree to rearrange the date for the review of the Parish Council's policies and procedures.

It was unanimously resolved to postpone this until the June 2017 meeting.

Cllrs ID Clarke and Hartree will be reviewing the policies in the meantime and reporting back to the Parish Council at the June meeting.

293.16 To consider the Parish Council's response to the white paper 'Fixing our broken housing market'.

It was agreed to wait to see how ALCA respond, and to then consider whether the Parish Council wishes to support their response.

293.17 To consider the three options provided by GB Sports for the works required at the play area.

It was unanimously resolved to agree to 'option1' which is '*to dig out spring rockers; import soil to level area and reinstall rockers to correct height for the sum of £696*'

293.18 Finance

To approve items of expenditure

Chq	Payee	Details	Net	VAT
300465	Anthony Jay	Clerk's Salary	£690.88	
300466	Anthony Jay	Expenses: Home working £19.50; Phone £1.67; Stamps £6.60; mileage £4.50	£32.27	
300467	HMRC	PAYE and NI	£236.64	
300468	Faye Thomas	Toilet Cleaning February.	£100.00	
300469	Bin-It	Dog bin emptying	£68.98	£13.79
300470	Wraxall and Failand Parish Council	Reimbursement of 1/3 rd of the cost of the Clerk attending events	£33.00	
300471	ALCA	Annual subscription	£212.68	
300472	GB Sports	Playground inspection February	£15.00	£3.00
300473	Staples	Printing ink	£37.73	£7.55
300474	Strutt and Parker	Rental of land for allotments	£72.50	
300475	NSC	Supply of grit bin	£150.00	£30.00
300476	Ian Gibson	Receipts for the removal of some white lines in the car park	£61.14	£8.48
DD	BT	Phone and broadband	£43.60	£8.72

It was unanimously resolved to approve the items of expenditure

293.19 To receive the following Open Spaces Committee reports:

A hole has been dug in the roadway in Accommodation Road which has been filled in, but has subsided. This is causing a danger. This is around 120 metres from the junction with the A370.

293.20 To receive the following brief holder's reports:

Coronation Hall

Cllr ID Clarke gave an update regarding the recently held Coronation Hall management committee meeting.

293.21 To consider the dates of the Parish Council Meetings in April and May, along with the date and format of the Annual Parish Meeting.

It was decided that the April Parish Council meeting will go ahead as planned on 10th April, which will commence at 7pm with a reduced agenda. This will be followed by the Annual Parish Meeting at 8pm. The Clerk will request that a NSC recycling officer attends to give a presentation to the

meeting. Parish Councillor brief holders will provide reports. Refreshments will be served after the meeting. The Clerk will arrange this.

The Clerk stated that he is not available to attend the Parish Council meeting due to be held on 8th May. It was decided to move this meeting to the 22nd May, if the hall is available.

293.22 The Council is recommended to resolve that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda item by reason of the confidential nature of the items of business to be transacted, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

It was unanimously resolved to exclude members of the press and public.

293.23 To consider whether the Parish Council should now invoke point 3.2 of their Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints Policy following the receipt of a further email on 2nd March 2017 from the two parishioners who have been the subject of decision made in minute 292.15

The Parish Councillors considered the email received on 2nd March 2017.

It was resolved (5 in favour, 2 against) that point 3.2 of the Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints Policy should be invoked as the following sections of the policy have been breached:

1.1 Behaviour which is obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitious

The email received on 2nd March is considered to be part of a chain of persistent emails.

1.5 Repeated and/or frequent requests for information, whether or not those requests are made under the access to information legislation.

Repeated emails have been received requesting information. The email received on 2nd March is the latest example.

The meeting concluded at 9.40pm

After the meeting finished, the Chair informed the Councillors that she would be standing down as Chairman and as a Councillor at the May meeting for personal reasons. The Chair said that she would continue to run the Bleadon News if requested to do so. The Councillors were grateful for this offer, and welcomed her offer for her continued involvement in the publication of the Bleadon News.

Cllr Gibbon announced that he will also be standing down as a Councillor at the end of April for personal reasons. He stated that a contributory factor in this decision has been the wearing effect of the emails received from the two Parishioners who are now the subject of the Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints policy, and the time spent reading and replying to them.

This will mean that there will be four Councillor vacancies. It is likely that there will be one applicant from a Parishioner who would like to become a Councillor.

The Clerk also announced that he would be resigning his position the following day, but would be prepared to remain in post until mid-July to enable the end of year accounts to be prepared, and to give the Parish Council time to appoint a successor. This is also for personal reasons, but the time taken dealing with the emails from the two Parishioners who are now the subject of the Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints policy was a contributory factor.

