



MINUTES OF BLEADON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11th APRIL 2022 AT THE CORONATION HALL

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Gill Williams (Chairman of Bleadon Parish Council).

Present: 9 members of the public, 9 Parish Councillors, 1 District Councillors and Bruce Poole (Clerk to Bleadon Parish Council).

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting the chairman asked if any of the public wished to speak.

Cllr Porter reported on the A370 reduced speed limit and the completed Bridge Road junction traffic island. A question was raised in relation to the Local Plan Consultation and North Somersets current Frack Free position which Cllr Porter agreed to bring up the full North Somerset Council meeting. Concerns were raised about how difficult it was to contact planning officers. This was felt to be due to hybrid homeworking. A question was also asked in relation to whether planning applications would be called into committee.

1. Welcome by the Chairman

The Chairman Gill Williams formally welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish Meeting.

An electronic version had been previously circulated and copied onto the village website. The Chairman sought approval of those minutes. They were formally approved.

3. Annual Reports: The reports with a * can be found as appendices (available on the Parish Council website or by request to the Clerk).

Parish Council Chairman's Report*
Bleadon Children's Playground Report
Finance 2021-2022
Budget Report 2022-2023
Coronation Hall Management Committee*
Bleadon Youth Club*
Bleadon Village News*
Bleadon in Bloom
Parish Council Website
Neighbourhood Watch and Community Safety*
Allotments*
Churchyard*
Planning*

During the reports the following questions / concerns were raised.

- Who is working on NDP – Cllr Boyce & Garrett.
- Whether Bleadon Parish Council are Trustees of the Coronation Halls. When do the Hall Committee meetings take place and how can residents / public access the minutes.
- The costs involved with editing and printing the Village Newsletter and suggestions for improvement including whether it is independent or not.
- The cost / funding of the trees being planted around the village and their ongoing maintenance.
- Where the Bleadon in Bloom Plaque will be located.

- Concern about the noticeboard maintenance and out of date information.
- The current state of the Jubilee Garden and its future.
- The lack of stability of structures on Pew Green.
- Police presence at meetings.
- Formation of a 20mph speed limit throughout the village.
- Mobile Speed cameras and enforcement.
- How Bleadon Parish Council inform residents of consultations and their responsibility in this area.

4. Open Forum

Questions comments, news and views

A resident asked when the minutes from this meeting will be published. The Clerk informed the meeting that they are drafted in preparation for noting at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May and then are agreed formally at the next Parish Meeting.

5. Date of next Annual Parish Meeting

This will be held at 7pm on 10th April 2023 in the Coronation Hall.

A query was raised in relation to this being Easter Monday.

Minutes above were prepared retrospectively by Liz Shayler (Locum Parish Clerk) in April 2023 in conjunction with Councillors and Members of the public present due to the absence of minutes for 2022.

Chairman's Annual Report for Bleadon Parish Council 2021/22

I spoke last year of the difficulty Covid had caused us in terms of our monthly meetings and indeed the APCM was by Zoom. This year I am pleased to report that for the majority of our meetings we have been able to use the Coronation Hall and I welcome villagers in person here this evening.

The inactivity in some areas reported last year has begun to become positivity. For example, two of our new councillors have recently taken over the topic of the Neighbourhood Plan and hope to report on developments in the Summer.

The working group promised last year to identify ways in which we can become more efficient in our planning decision format has undergone a serious revision by Councillors Clarke and Davis and the process of receiving applications, visiting, identifying objections, decision making and reporting back to BPC as well as notifying North Somerset Council of these decisions is now beginning to become a more efficient procedure all round. Our thanks go to the Councillors involved in this development.

Thanks go to Councillors Clarke and Sheppard for the huge amount of work undertaken in producing the up-to-date recording of the Council Assets.

In 20/21 normal village life was put on hold with no May Fayre, Youth Club, Coronation Hall activities etc but gradually during the year these have returned almost to normal and villagers are beginning to return to our monthly meetings. We have a small but loyal regular group and we welcome them and thank them for their interest.

North Somerset Council finally responded to our requests for changes to be made to the A370. We have as yet not got the requested traffic lights or central island, but we have managed to get the speed limit reduced and this is now beginning to become apparent with drivers recognising the 40mph area. We will continue to press North Somerset for the whole improvement request. Finally, too the rhyne repairs in Bleadon Road were completed. We thank our NS Councillors Porter and Solomon for their continued attendance and support.

After their very successful first year the Bleadon in Bloom team continued to work hard to make our lovely village look even better. More bulbs more tubs and a team to help them to keep looking good. The bed of flowers by the church/ market cross green was solid with the colour of begonias for over six months. We hope that the Jubilee summer of 22 might be even better. Continued thanks to Councillor Hemingway and her band of helpers. Thanks too to our Adrian our Village Ranger and Mark Howe our grass cutter who work well to maintain the good looks of our village.

We now have our quarterly village magazine which has this year had 100 extra copies of each issue delivered to Bleadon Hill. Our thanks to Ellie Young who edits and delivers the issues. More of this later.

The Play Park is back to its normal business although it was the one place during the pandemic which almost retained normality. Our young children continue to enjoy it although the equipment is now very out of date and badly needs replacing. A future project for us along with a decent level area for older children to play games.

The Youth Club is back on Thursday evenings and most clubs have returned to the Coronation Hall.

Our Council membership has again undergone changes. We said goodbye to Councillor Sharman at the beginning of the Council year due to ill health and more recently to Councillor Scarisbrick. We thank them both for all the work they undertook.

We have been so lucky to have gained two replacements. Sara Gerrard who joined us at the end of the calendar year and has already undertaken tasks for us and just very recently Graham Getty who has also leapt in at the deep end for us. We welcome them both to a now full complement of councillors.

It was with sadness that we learned during the year of the death of our precious chairman Jim Baines. He had left the village only weeks earlier to live in Bristol. We remember him with thanks.

Last Autumn, with the coming Jubilee celebrations in mind we made the decision to make the Council's Jubilee project the refilling of the clock on the church tower. It has not been regilded for over 50 years. When we announced this, it was a surprise to a large number of the population to hear that the clock did in fact belong to them and not the church. It was purchased at the end of the C19th for the village and been part of the b maintained by us since. Although funds are being raised through donations from individuals and local firms and grants the balance will come from Council reserves. It is hoped that it will be completed in time for the week of Jubilee celebrations.

Along with this project we set up a village Jubilee committee to plan a week of celebrations from May 29th to June 5th which is now well into plans. As a result we also agreed to double the number of village magazines to be produced for the Spring and Summer issues so that the whole of Bleadon Hill could be invited to be part of our celebrations and that the summer issue will be a record kept by the village of the week so that future generations will know what their village did in one summer week in 2022.

My thanks go to all my colleagues on the Council for the work they are undertaking for the village. Especial thanks go to our clerk Bruce Poole for keeping me supported and on the right track and his work overall for Bleadon Parish Council.

We have this year continued to help to make this village of ours a pleasant place in which to live.

Gillian Williams

Coronation Hall Committee Report

I have sat on this Committee for about 6 months. In that time with the lifting of the pandemic restrictions there has been a lot of positive progress.

Briefly:

- Despite the lack of income during the Covid pandemic, the good work of the Treasurer, Ian Gibson, managed to keep the finances and payment of bills on track and keep us afloat.
- Hall bookings have resumed and it is good to see the return of many Clubs plus some new ones e.g Tai Chi and Baby & Toddler group which is great to have up and running again
- The markets have resumed since December and are very successful with good attendance.
- The charging structure for hall bookings has been streamlined and the charges slightly increased from January.
- The vaulted ceiling of the Coronation Hall has been painted and the Committee intends to paint the internal walls in the near future.
- New flooring has been laid in the foyer to the Coronation Hall
- Repairs to the floor of the Coronation Hall have been carried out although this is an ongoing problem and further works will be needed.
- The Committee and the Council have reiterated the agreement regarding maintenance of the outdoor areas around the hall complex following which the Council will over the course of the forthcoming year and beyond, undertake some maintenance work including external painting the outside of the Halls, emergency exits at the rear of the Jubilee Room, revamp the areas behind the halls and make them low maintenance going forward, as well as general maintenance to keep the areas looking smart, attractive and tidy
- A new kitchen is to be installed during August. Regular users of the kitchen have been consulted and a meeting held with those users on 07 April for their input and suggestions. The Committee will consider all the input at its next meeting. In the meantime designs and cost are being sought from local companies. On the initiative of the Chair, Betty Paterson, a very successful silent auction was recently held which raised circa £700 to add to the kitchen refurbishment fund.
- The Committee and Council are presently liaising to install a more up to date projector and screen

So, I think you will agree a very positive and productive time for all involved.

I extend my thanks to the Chair, Betty, Treasurer, Ian and Secretary, Kevin Barrett each of whom is efficient in their role and collectively manage the Committee and the affairs of the Hall in a professional manner.

Youth Club Report

During covid the youth club was redecorated inside and outside making it a very warm and welcoming venue for members and other clubs who use it.

Bleadon youth club is back up and running successfully after the closure from covid. There are on average 20-25 youngsters using it each week, with three YMCA youth leaders running the club. The majority of the youngsters are from Hugh Sexies school. This gives them a rare opportunity to socialise with friends outside of school.

Members enjoy the facilities offered to them, table tennis and pool being popular amongst other activities from their program such as

Arts and crafts

Cooking

Wide games

Quizzes

Team building games.

In the past Bleadon has been fortunate to have benefited from an exceptionally cheap service thanks to additional funding from government grants to the YMCA that has now unfortunately stopped.

The club committee is currently in negotiations with the YMCA over future services following a 337 percent price hike due to government funding being stopped for youth activities.

Bleadon News report 2022

The usual number of copies for the news each quarter is 600 for the village and 100 for the hill. We increased the number for the last issue in March to 1300 in total, and will be doing the same in June to include Bleadon Hill, and the immediate area. We did this to showcase what was happening in the village for the Queen's Jubilee and be able to report on it afterwards. We wanted Bleadon Hill to feel part of the village and included.

Councillors Rob Tyson and Sara Garrett conducted a review with the Bleadon News Editor Ellie Young in February. Previous to this meeting we asked the Councillor's at the January parish council meeting to provide us with some villager feedback. Mostly the feedback was positive, but some things we could improve on are as follows-

- Do we need Articles from the Chair, Editor and Parish Clerk...too much duplication?
- Font size too large
- Business articles should be marked as "Advertorial".
- Too many pictures of birds
- Not enough general information about whats going on in Bleadon
- An expression to include Bleadon Hill from a resident

All of the feedback received was discussed and the Editor has made a few changes to the magazine.

The result of the review along with costs were presented to the council at the February 2022 meeting with a commitment to continue to receive feedback to make continuous improvement.

We will actively seek feedback from Bleadon hill residents as to their thoughts and ideas following the distribution of the jubilee copies. This will be discussed with the Council at the September meeting and a decision as to whether to include them in the future will be taken. This will be in conjunction with a further review with the Editor to investigate the increased revenue from the advertising we could potentially receive as a result of the wider distribution of the magazine.

A "thank you" was given to Ellie Young for her work as Editor of the magazine.

Neighbourhood Watch and Community Safety

Neighbourhood watch

I am afraid I have not made as much progress as I would have liked. My aim is to create a register of all the co-ordinators and the areas of the Parish within the scheme, create a line of communication so that there can be a sharing of information and ideas. From this exercise I can then see which areas are not within the scheme and do what I can to find a co-ordinator and arrange some input and guidance from the local constabulary.

Community safety:

1. Following concerns raised by Parishioners regarding speeding vehicles, I had a long and informative conversation with the Speed Enforcement Officer.
 - The Unit attend every 4 – 6 weeks.
 - They vary the days and times and respond to complaints of speeding e.g. they attended at 7am one Sunday morning following complaints that vehicles heading for the golf course were speeding along Bleadon Rd.
 - They also cover the A370, particularly on bike night.
 - Anyone with concerns regarding speeding vehicles can contact the enforcement unit direct or report your concern to the Clerk to the Parish Council and in turn I will liaise with the Enforcement Officer

2. I spoke with the investigating Officer regarding the stabbing incident in the Churchyard. While he was unable to disclose any details, he did say that it was believed to be a pre-arranged rendezvous by the assailant and victim, both of whom were from outside of the area.

3. Remember PCSO Mike Benfield holds a monthly drop in surgery at the Post Office. The next surgery is on 20 April from 9 – 10am. Here you can obtain advice on how to protect your belongings, find out more about the work the neighbourhood policing team are doing in our area or raise any concerns you have.

4. To report a crime you should call 101, or if it is an emergency or crime in process then 999.

Allotments

Madam Chairman, Councillors, Ladies & Gentlemen.

I am pleased to report that all the allotment plots are taken altho some could do with a little TLC and there is a waiting list of 3.

The Antislip Socy have acquired another $\frac{1}{2}$ plot due to the enthusiasm of their ^{patients} clients. Next to them is the Bleasdon & Bloom Polytunnel which can be visited by those interested in horticulture.

A skip has been ordered by the Village Ranger to remove unwanted rubbish, wheelbarrows, metal items left by previous tenants. It is hoped that in the future that any plot that is vacated is left in a satisfactory and tidy state, since it costs the Council a considerable amount of money to remove rubbish.

Churchyard.

The churchyard is looking very tidy now the grass has had its spring cut. Appreciation & Thanks must go to Mark Howes for his support and maintenance. The P.C. are awaiting a report regarding the ownership of the Bier house, whether the P.C. is responsible for its upkeep or the P.C.

A dog bin is to be installed at the end of the foot path leading to Satchell.

With regards to the clock, altho not a churchyard matter, it is situated within the confines of the church tower. As many will know it belongs to the Parishoners of Bleasdon and is in need of repainting. The Parish Council decided to undertake this project to commemorate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. It is hoped that this will be completed by the beginning of June, but its progress is being hampered by the powers that be at Wells.

This concludes my report.

I joined Bleadon Parish Council in 2008 but a few years ago I took a short time out, during which I attended just about every Parish Council meeting as a Parishioner. It was during this time that I became increasingly concerned that the statutory procedural requirements for Planning Applications were not being adhered to and therefore BPC were not fulfilling their legal obligations or their duty to Parishioners.

Hence in 2017, I started to monitor the required procedures, collecting and recording relevant stats/data. These stats not only revealed and highlighted the problems but also that they had gone unnoticed.

When I rejoined the Council I continued to monitor all stages of the application process until such time that I was able to present figures to illustrate our failings – it was evident that throughout all the stages of the process our Statutory Requirements were not being met.

Planning Law prescribes that Planning Authorities (NSC) are required to consult with specified bodies and we the Parish Council are one of these. Prior to making decisions on Planning Applications, Planning Authorities must consult the relevant statutory consultees for their opinions.

Government Guidance (9th May 2020) sets out the process for efficient and inclusive consultation of Planning Applications. This sets out exactly what Local Planning Authorities expect in terms of a response and what consultees should expect from the Local Planning Authority. Local Planning Authorities must provide consultees with the information that will enable them to provide a substantive response in return the consultees have a duty to provide this response within a prescribed twenty-one day period. An extension of this deadline can be requested and agreed if there is considered to be reasonable grounds.

Consultees (BPC) are required to provide an annual report on their performance to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and are also encouraged to publish their reports on their websites.

These were the legal requirements and procedures that were not being complied with. So, in November 2020 I presented a report to BPC member expressing my concern in regard to our failures. At the end of the year our figures showed that my concerns were shown to be well founded, in that we had received **thirty-six Planning Applications from NSC but only nineteen BPC submissions were shown as being received by them.**

Over the next couple of months we discussed our concerns and the way to progress from out of what was undoubtedly a failure on our part and a cause for real concern. With our aim to meet our Statutory Requirements we decided on a Working Party consisting of Cllrs Mary Sheppard, Ann Davis and myself. Although I say it myself, I think we made a good team - Cllr Sheppard's memory and knowledge of the parish is amazing, I think she know who owns or has owned most local properties and certainly every bit of land in the parish – Cllr Davis had just recently widen her legal knowledge by attending a course on all aspect of Planning and myself who had learnt a fair bit over the years but was also committed to not only complying with the legal requirements but with maintaining records and stats to show that we actually were.

We met several times, phoned and emailed each other many many many times. We worked hard but certainly had our laughs along the way – and finally we were able to produce a report that we presented to BPC Members and which they adopted and is now our 'Planning Protocol'.

So, how does this Protocol work?

We receive a 'Weekly Register' from NSC that includes any Planning Application that is submitted by a Parishioner of Bleadon. We then use NSC website to study the submitted plans before arranging a site visit. In the past we were able to contact the applicant to arrange such a visit, but now due to Data Protection we do not have access to contact details – thankfully when people have been at home, they have always been understanding when a group of us just appear on their doorstep's.

If the applicant is at home we are pleased to meet with them and for them to show us around and explain their proposals to us – if no one is at home we check as much as we are able from the property's perimeter. After visiting we discuss the proposal and our comments are written up and circulated and then presented at the next BPC meeting so Councillors who have not visited the site are able to take part in the discussion. As consultees we do not make any decisions so our agreed comments are submitted to NSC for consideration in their decision-making. The applicant is welcomed to attend and speak in support of their application at our meeting.

Once our submission is submitted to NSC we monitor it to ensure that it is uploaded onto the appropriate Planning Application. We can then follow its progress, by monitoring each stage of the process and if things are not progressing as they should our Parish Clerk will be informed and will take the necessary steps to hopefully resolve the problem.

I am not able to provide our final stats for 2021 as of thirty notifications of Planning Applications four are still awaiting a decision. However, I am able to see that we have done quite well and the end of year figures will be a great improvement on the previous year and so will be fairly near to fulfilling our Statutory Requirements. We are now working with 2022 Planning Applications and are determined that the end of year stats will be as near perfect as possible – fingers crossed!

I would like to thank Ann and Mary for sharing with me the same enthusiasm and determination to produce a workable Planning Protocol.

Thanks must also go to those Councillors who have turned up and at times in all winds and weathers to carry out the required site visits. I think they would agree that on many occasions we have been 'wind assisted' along Roman Road.

Finally, but certainly not least, thanks to the Applicants who have taken the time to welcome us and explain the details of their proposals. These visits are often dual purpose, enabling us to meet and to get to know our parishioners and we hope they are pleased to meet with us.

Thank you for listening.

Councillor Mrs I.D Clarke