

## **Bleadon Parish Council**

### **Annual Parish Meeting - 11 April 2016**

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Bleadon Parish Council that was held in the Coronation Hall, Coronation Road, Bleadon on Monday 11 April 2016 at 7.30pm when the following business was transacted:

**PRESENT** Mr Steve Hartree (Chair)

The following Councillors were recorded as being present:

Mrs Mary Sheppard, Mrs ID Clarke, Mrs Claire Gutsell

The Chair explained that as the Clerk has resigned Cllr Gutsell will be acting as the Clerk for tonight's meeting.

**APOLOGIES** Cllr David Chinn, District Cllr Terry Porter and Mr Roger Hart

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** District Cllr Elfan ap Rees, 14 members of the public and 2 Police Community Support Officers were in attendance for part of the meeting.

#### **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed the District Councillor and members of the public.

#### **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13 April 2015 were read out by the Chair. They were approved and signed by the Chair as being a correct record.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT 2016**

Bleadon Parish Council has had a somewhat traumatic year since the 2015 Annual Parish Meeting.

Bruce Poole, Clerk to the Council for well over 20 years, decided to retire in 2015 and did so with the Council's very best wishes and grateful thanks for so many years of dedicated service.

A new Clerk, Miss Hazel Brinton, was appointed but, regrettably, resigned in March of this year, so the Council, currently, is without a Clerk.

Councillor Ian Gibson, who had been elected Chairman of the Council, resigned for health and family reasons part way through the year; Councillor Mrs Carole Finlay also resigned from the Council last month; the Council's thanks go to these two Councillors for their service.

The Parish Council co-opted Mr David Chinn onto the Council to fill one of the vacancies, but there are still four vacancies for Councillors and expressions of interest in being co-opted onto the Council will be most welcome from parishioners.

The Parish Council has continued to protect the parish boundary by examining all appropriate planning applications, and has endeavoured to maintain the environment and Bleadon as an attractive place in which to live.

The Ranger, employed by the Council, has undertaken a multitude of tasks to enhance the appearance and facilities of the parish, and the Council's thanks go to him for his enthusiastic approach to his duties.

Public participation at all meetings of the Council and its committees is encouraged as Councillors wish to hear of the concerns and aspirations of the residents of Bleadon. The Council endeavours to raise with the appropriate bodies issues of concern to parishioners and, always, to improve communication between the Council and other organisations.

In the current economic climate the Parish Council keeps alert to the possibility of functions being transferred from Government and North Somerset Council, and always seeks to protect services provided to the residents of Bleadon.

The Parish Council wishes to thank North Somerset Councillor Terry Porter for his attendance at Council meetings, for his advice and for representing the Council's views to North Somerset.

I thank all Parish Councillors, both past and present, for their work and support through what has been a difficult year. Parish Councillors are volunteers who give of their time and efforts on behalf of the parish and who, at times, have a difficult job to do. My thanks go also to members of the public who faithfully attend Council meetings and so express an interest in what goes on in Bleadon.

Finally, I wish all parishioners well for the future in their lives in this beautiful village.

Steve Hartree

#### **PARISH PRECEPT**

Cllr S Hartree gave an overview of the Parish Precept and confirmed that this had been set at £38,000 for the fourth consecutive year.

#### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS 2015/2016**

The Chair presented the Planning Report on behalf of the previous chair of the Planning committee Cllr Findlay.

Bleadon Parish council has considered all planning applications and enforcement orders in relation to the Parish and, where appropriate, submitted observations to North Somerset council.

The aim of the Parish Council has been to maintain the character and history of the parish and retain the village boundary and open spaces.

#### **CORONATION HALLS REPORT 2015/16**

As the Council Representative and the Secretary of the Hall Management Committee I am pleased to present this report.

I think it fair to say that the Halls not only stand in a central position of the Village but I feel they also play a central part in the life of our village. I think it also fair to say that they (the Halls) are well thought of and this is reflected in the fact that one hears very few if any moans or criticisms regarding them.

The Management Committee meet monthly and for many years Len Chamberlain has been our gentlemanly Chairman steering us in a most diplomatic way. It is made up of representatives of user groups and interested village residents. The major responsibilities of the Management Committee are the general maintenance and the operating, repairs and improvements and health and safety issues.

Naturally there is a cost to these, which is ever increasing. Our main items of expenditure are Gas/Electricity, Insurance, Cleaning and Maintenance. Our finance is in the safe hands of our Treasurer Ian Gibson who advice keeps us well on track. Our accounts are examined annually by Shirley Campbell an Independent Examiner and I am pleased to say she confirmed that our latest end of year accounts (2014/15) have been correctly maintained and that she has no cause for concern.

The Halls are well used throughout the year providing a meeting place for some twenty groups who meet either weekly or monthly - indeed the booking calendar is completely full. Groups meeting here offer a wide variety of interests and activities to all age groups.

The Halls continue to play a central part in the life of the village and this indeed is borne out by the fact they 'The Halls' host the most important dates in the lives of many local residents - receptions for christening, birthdays, weddings and funeral wakes. So all in all it's not just the NHS that can boast from cradle to grave or from womb to tomb - Coronation Hall can be seen to achieve the same.

The monthly Village Market is both a major source of income and a social event for local residents and beyond. Thirty plus tables are booked every month, offering a wide range of items - including food, plants, books, crafts and many more. We continue to be grateful to the stallholders for their support, to the hard working volunteers who play a key role in the background organisation that ensures its smooth running and the Kitchen Volunteers, who cheerfully cook and serve snacks and drinks throughout the year but pulling all the stops out and more for the Christmas Market.

Overlooking and co-ordinating the day today management of the Hall is our Booking Officer Joanne Jones, who is now quite an expert in cajoling and persuading and shifting things around to fit everyone in and keeping everybody happy. I think everyone will agree that the Halls are always fresh and clean and we are lucky to have Anne Bird-Kellogg and Angela Harris who take a great pride in their work. A big thank you to all three.

As well as income raised as already mentioned we are very grateful to the following people for their continued support - Peter Lindsay through the sale of his Village Maps, Pete Williams through the collecting and sale of books, Les Masters through running the bar and of late his involvement with Penny Robinson in the production and showing of 'The History of Bleadon' with all proceed to coming to us.

Last year we were planning to embark on major works to the entrance, central areas and lavatories so making it fully accessible to all - wheelchair users, buggies etc. Having had our plans approved by North Somerset and secured a local contractor to carry out the work, which hopefully will commence in June. We will do our best to limit the inconvenience but undoubtedly there will be some but it w I am sure you will agree that the end result will be well worth it.

I end by saying I think we are indeed privileged to have in our midst the Coronation and Jubilee Halls - I hope you continue to use the halls.

I.D Clarke - For and on behalf of the Hall Management Committee

## OPEN SPACES REPORT 2015/16

I am pleased to report yet another good year for our village and its open spaces. A great deal of work and effort is required by many to make and keep our village looking good throughout the seasons and I am sure it is appreciated by all.

Having said this, sadly I have to start by mentioning what has become a regular featured issue. If over the years you have read past Open Spaces reports you will be aware that the only negative issue highlighted by both myself and the previous Chairman (Penny Robinson) is that of irresponsible dog owners failing to pick up after their dogs. What more can be said? Poo bags can be easily purchased, there are bins around the village or it can even be taken home and disposed of, so please please 'Pick Up'. If you see or know of an irresponsible dog owner please inform one of your Councillors - confidentiality will be respected.

Moans out of the way - now for the positives. As in previous years the floral displays have provided us with splashes of colour throughout the seasons - with most peoples favourites being the spring displays. As well the bulbs in the tubs we have those along the roadside verges and those that have just appeared in the hedgerows and on banks.

The shrub and plant areas and the general area around the Village Hall, Youth Club and Play Park have all been well maintained by Ian Findlay our Village Ranger. He also manages the general upkeep around the village and the outlying areas - Hillcote, Roman and Accommodation Roads, Purn Quarry as well as the lay-bys and pathways. By being all around the village another valuable service he provides is keeping us informed of any problems or issues as and when they arise, so enabling us to offer a quick response and thus avoiding them becoming too problematic. Our thanks to Ian for all his work.

Our thanks also to Mark Howe and his team who continue to maintain and cut all our grassed areas as well as undertaking various maintenance jobs around the village so helping to keep our village spick and span.

Earlier in the year repair work was carried out on the wall on the Coronation Road side of the play area. This work was required as the wall was crumbling and stones were rolling out into the road - it had become a matter of concern regarding safety.

Some of you may well be aware that some three years ago North Somerset Council withdrew their budget for public lavatories. So, after careful consideration and a study of the usage of our lavatories revealed just how well used they were, we decided to take on and maintain the provision. We were able to secure a grant from North Somerset Council to cover the legal costs involved and the outstanding repairs. During the past year by changing cleaning services we have not only made a financial saving but have seen an improvement in the received service. We are pleased to say that there have only been a few minor problems - a short spate of loo roll nicking.

The rustic bench at The Veale has been replaced - which I am sure will once again be much appreciated by passing cyclists.

Earlier in the year the saddle stones were stolen from Well Green - we think that whoever stole them thought they were old and worth a good deal - in fact they cost little and were relatively new having been coated with yoghurt to make them look old! We are planning to purchase sink troughs as replacements - as well as looking pretty when planted up, they will also protect the green from vehicles attempting to park on or to drive over it.

Keeping our village looking good and so being a picturesque place to live, walk and visit relies on the time and efforts of many, so our sincere thanks to:

To those who kindly tend the village tubs throughout the year and the residents who plant up and maintain their own containers outside their homes.

To all who help on 'Plant Up' days.

To all who pick up litter as they walk around the village.

To all responsible dog owners and all who pick up after the irresponsible dog owners.

To those who willingly lend a hand to deal with general problems.

To all who take the time to report or share their concerns, suggestions and compliments with us. Please continue to do so.

These efforts do not go unnoticed and are greatly valued and appreciated.

### **CHURCHYARD REPORT 2015/16**

Throughout the year the usual general remedial work has been carried out around the churchyard - the cutting back of the undergrowth and the general trimming and tidying. We have to keep a close eye on the Bier House to avoid it being taken over by the lurking knotweed.

We continue to receive an annual amount of monies from the War Graves Commission towards the upkeep of our military graves. We feel very privileged to have responsibility for this task.

Being a 'closed churchyard' the responsibility for its maintenance has been transferred to us, the Parish Council. This of course comes with accompanying cost implications. In the past few years we have had to undertake expensive repairs to the old stonewalls and earlier this year we identified more repair work that needs to be undertaken. The church architect carried out an inspection and subsequently produced a specification for the work required. We have sought and received quotes from several stonemasons and they will be presented at the next Finance and Personnel Committee.

We and the Parochial Church Council are aware that the general remedial work has not been adequate and the churchyard is sadly beginning to look rather scruffy with many of the graves very overgrown and in a poor state of repair. We are presently in discussions with members of the PCC as to how we can address the problem.

Many expressed great concern when earlier this year the church clock broke down - it was greatly missed and much enquired after. It is now back in action and being cared for by Brian Robinson who has reliably carried out this task since July 1997. At times one can say that it's not just care the old clock requires but intense nursing with daily adjustments frequently having to be made. In September last year Mr Robinson worked out that over the years he had made 1,500 plus visits to the clock tower so climbing approximately 150,000 steps. His care and his commitment is both valued and appreciated.

Our thanks to Mark Howe for the work in cutting the grassy areas and the general maintenance and upkeep.

Our sincere thanks to all who when walking through the churchyard take the time and trouble to pick up the litter, remove dead flowers, stand up overturned pots and vases and other general tidying tasks.

## **PLAY AREA REPORT 2015/16**

The play area continues to be a well-used feature of our village. It is enjoyed by all ages from babies to grandparents. It is interesting to watch the changing patterns of usage throughout the week.

On weekdays, during the morning you will see babies and toddlers with mum and/or grandparents and in the afternoons young school children will be included in the group. Early evening dads venture in with their offspring and later it becomes the meeting place for our teenagers. Then, at weekends it's a free for all with everybody joining in at the same time. We are pleased to have such a popular and safe place for residents and visitors of all ages to meet, play and picnic.

To ensure the safety the area is inspected annually by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and any recommendations highlighted in their subsequent report we immediately address. As well as this our Village Ranger carries out regular checks of the play area and equipment. Health and safety guidance require us to have extensive areas of bark to break any falls from the equipment, unfortunately this means that we have lost a lot of the grassed areas.

Our thanks to Ian Findlay the Village Ranger and to Mark Howe for keeping the area safe and well maintained.

Earlier this year changes were made to the layout around the play equipment. On a bitterly cold Sunday morning an area was marked out and a group of volunteers could be seen digging for England, leaving passers-by wondering what was occurring. Thank you to the volunteers that braved the cold on that Sunday morning - your efforts have certainly improved the layout.

A few years back moans and groans about the play area were continually voiced with very few positive comments reaching Councillors ears. Yes, we did make some mistakes but hopefully by listening to the criticism these have been rectified and for the last two years plus all comments received have thankfully been positive ones.

We hope you continue to enjoy the park and we would be pleased to receive your suggestions for any further improvements.

Cllr I.D Clarke

## **ALLOTMENT REPORT 2015/2016**

All the allotments are fully occupied and looking tidy for the spring planting.

Concerns have arisen over the dumping of non-compostable rubbish at the North East end of the allotments. Please take your metal, glass and wooden items to the recycling centre, as failure to keep the site clean and tidy will result in a rent increase to cover the cost of a skip.

Final can I ask anyone who sees dogs being exercised around the allotment perimeter to please let me know as a health hazard can ensue.

Cllr Mary Sheppard

## **ROAD TRANSPORT**

I am please to report the resurfacing of Chestnut Lane, a long overdue improvement.

The potholes along Accommodation Road have been repaired, but we have an ongoing issue on the A370, from the Caravan Park to Indian Masala. I am pressing North Somerset Council to get this rectified.

Traffic lights on the A370 at the the same location have been promised for the 2016/17 financial year.

Flooding at Bridge Garage has highlighted a problem with pollution. It is up to Bridge Garage to rectify this by installing a catchment pit, as the Environment Agency will not allow oil sediment to drain into the nearby rhyme.

Portable activated speed sign is to be introduced for a six week period during the coming year by North Somerset Council. The three locations for the sign are; Bleadon Road, Shiplate Road and Bridge Road. This will encourage drivers to consider other road users.

Cllr Mary Sheppard

## **POLICE BEAT REPORT 14th MARCH TO 11<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016**

Calls from the parish received = 47                      Crimes recorded = 3

During the above period 47 calls were made to the police by residents of the parish compared to 14 for the same period last year.

## **OPEN SESSION**

District Cllr Elfan ap Rees, assists with any issues relating to Bleadon. Most of the problems concern regarding the application on Bleadon Hill. Has spoken out against this application. Worse roads first is the priority for the NS plan.

Queens / Shiplate Road white lines, can this be re-painted. Cllr Rees thought that this will be possible.

Will Bleadon ever officially be included in the Hutton and locking ward. Cllr Rees said this is a historical issue from when parishes were set out.

The issue of speeding on Bleadon Road. Cllr Rees suggested a speed activated sign could be installed if the BPC paid for it. Cost is dependent on a number of issues.

Ian Gibson informed everyone that BPC has under written £20000 for the refurbishment of the Halls.

Concern was raised regarding the damage to kerb stones in bridge road from lorries exiting Marshalls Quarry. BPC will contact NS Council. Parking along the road sensibly can also help the issue.

Concern was raised about the edge of the verge on the corner around the Croquet Club. NS council says that pot hole is not part of the carriage way and therefore not responsible for the hole. BPC will raise this with NS council, and look into paying for this ourselves.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.