

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 9th January 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.

Seven members of the public were present.

291.1 To receive any apologies for non-attendance

There were no apologies for non-attendance.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

291.3 To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th December 2016

It was unanimously resolved to approve the minutes.

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

291.4 To invite public participation

i) Members of the public

The owners of 18 Coronation Road spoke about the fallen wall between their property and the Churchyard. They said that the wall had deteriorated since the frosts started, and they were concerned that if work was not carried out to repair the wall straight away then further delay could make the problem worse.

The Chair decided to bring the agenda item regarding the wall forward. It was explained that the work is due to take place in the spring as lime mortar is to be used, and that work cannot be done in the winter. However, it could take place in the winter if a heated canopy was used, but this would mean an extra cost of £580.

A discussion regarding this took place.

It was proposed and seconded that the Council should pay the extra £580 for the heated canopy to enable the work to commence as soon as the preferred contractor's references had been obtained.

It was resolved not to pay the extra £580 for the canopy (4 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention)

ii) District Councillor

Cllr Porter spoke about the recent planning enquiry, and firstly referred to a number of emails which had been recently sent to the Clerk and himself from a local couple (whom he named) who run a community website. He said that a lot of the issues they have raised are inaccurate. Cllr Porter said that he would explain the situation. The planning enquiry started before the last Parish Council meeting and he expressed concern at that meeting about the lack of attendance from the residents of Bleadon. The issue of the Parish Plan was raised at the last Parish Council meeting, when it was asked if it could be introduced into the enquiry. Cllr Porter gave the Plan to the Rule 6 party for them to introduce as it would not have been possible for the Parish or District Council to introduce it after the closing date for new information which was at the beginning of November. The only way that the Parish Plan could have been introduced was for the Rule 6 party to include it in their presentation, but that was not possible as they had made their presentation prior to the Parish Council meeting, so it was too late.

Cllr Porter said that the unfortunate thing is that Parish Plans carry absolutely no weight at all in planning issues nowadays. When Parish Plans were prepared some ten years ago many Parishes prepared plans, but before they could be lodged with NSC as part of the Local Plan, the Government changed the legislation and because of this change no-one in the NS area was able to have their Parish Plans adopted. Since then Neighbourhood Plans have taken over from Parish Plans and Local Plans. Even Neighbourhood Plans now carry very minimal weight when it comes to planning issues. This is very frustrating as all the work done in preparing these plans was now for nothing. Cllr Porter was disappointed when the NSC barrister at the planning enquiry told him that these plans carry little or no weight.

Cllr Porter said that the applicant's barrister told the hearing that an improved bus service would be introduced to serve the new houses. This was incorrect, as Crossways will not be providing this service. However, the Inspector did say that the provision of a bus service or otherwise would not affect her decision.

Planning Inspectors are being very harsh with their decisions. Unless it can be shown that there will be 'demonstrative harm' to the environment then they will approve applications. They are instructed that their starting point must always approve large housing applications unless 'demonstrative harm' can be proved. That is the difficulty.

Cllr Porter said that the lack of support from the village at the hearing was very noticeable, and unfortunately the Inspector will be taking that into account when she makes her decision. The NSC barrister said that sustainability can now be ignored when it comes to fighting planning applications. Major developments are being approved in in-fill villages all the time now.

The Inspector's decision should be known in four or five weeks' time.

iii) The Police

There was no Police presence, and a Police report had not been received.

The Clerk said that before Christmas he emailed the PCC Sue Mountstevens asking why there is rarely a Police attendance at Parish Council meetings, and also why a Police report is often not received. He has today received a phone call from her staff officer, Ashley Jones, who gave him the following answer to his queries:

- Police Officers and PCSOs will no longer attend Parish Council meetings as a matter of course. The local beat manager should be informed that a meeting will be taking place, and someone may attend if they are free, but it certainly cannot be guaranteed, and should not be expected.
- Police reports take a disproportionate amount of Police time to prepare – time that could be better spent operationally. Crime figures for each neighbourhood can easily be found on-line, and so if anyone wishes to know what crime has occurred in their area then they can do so that way.
- If there is a specific problem which a Parish Council wishes to discuss with a local officer e.g. a specific crime trend in the area, then an officer may be able to attend if given sufficient notice.

Mr Jones said that Police resources are now spread so thinly that they cannot give the commitment to Parish Council meetings that has happened

in the past.

For those who do not know how to find out the crime figures, here is a guide: Click on <https://www.police.uk/>

Click on 'Find Your Neighbourhood, and then enter your postcode or place name.

Select your particular area from the drop down list.

Click on 'Explore the Crime Map' then click on one of the black circles with a number which appear. Click on a black circle again, and that will show you the number of crimes which have occurred in that street, and the type of crime.

It normally takes between one and three months for the information to be uploaded. Currently the November crimes are displayed. There are two drop down lists at the top of the map, where you can select a different month, or a particular crime.

Mr Jones said that Ms Mountstevens is of the belief that as this gives the public access to the crime figures in their area, Police attendance at Parish Council meetings is no longer routinely required.

It was agreed that there should no longer be an agenda item at Parish Council meetings 'to receive the Police report'.

291.5 To consider the following planning application:

16/P/2866/F. Land to south of Mulberry House Roman Road Bleadon BS24 0AB. Conversion and change of use of agricultural barn to form 2no. holiday lets; works to include alterations to interior and exterior of building.

It was unanimously resolved not to oppose the application.

291.6 To receive the Clerk's report.

A discussion took place regarding a number of emails received from two residents who have been making demands for information. The Clerk said that so far this week he has spent over four hours (over a quarter of his allocated hours) simply dealing with these emails. The Clerk asked the Councillors how they wished to deal with this issue. It was decided that it was unfair that the Clerk was spending so much time dealing with two individuals, when the time could be better spent serving the whole of the village, and the Council's Vexatious Correspondence and Complaints Policy would be invoked.

It was reported that this is not the first time that the Council has to invoke this policy in relation to these individuals. A sub-committee consisting of the Chair, along with Cllrs Chinn and Gibbon will assess

whether they consider the emails to be vexatious, and will report back to the next Parish Council meeting.

The new grit bin has been ordered for Muddy Lane.

GB Sports have carried out their first playground inspection, and have identified a number of issues. A site meeting will be arranged with the Chair and Vice Chair for these issues to be explained. If any urgent work is required then the Chair and Vice Chair will have the power to authorise the work to be carried out by GB Sports.

The open meeting to decide which three residents will be joining the Council when they hold their regular meetings with Marshalls in the future was discussed. It was decided to hold the meeting on 23rd January if the hall is available or on 30th January if it is not. The selection of the three people will be made by a public vote during the meeting, where everyone attending will be invited to vote for up to three people who they would like to join the Council and then the votes will be counted. Nothing else will be discussed at the meeting.

291.7 Exchange of information between Councillors.

A new cover for the defibrillator is now needed. Cllr Gibbon will liaise with the ex-Ranger regarding this.

A firework display began at 3am on New Year's Day in the village. This was unacceptable behaviour, and very disrespectful to local residents. An article will be prepared for the next edition of Bleadon News asking all residents to act in a socially responsible manner.

Roman Road and Celtic Way will be closed for road works shortly. The Roman Road closure notice is already displayed on the notice boards. It was requested that the Celtic Way closure notice is also displayed. The Clerk pointed out that it is the responsibility of NSC to advertise the closures, not the Parish Council, however notices will be displayed.

There have been problems again over the Christmas period regarding refuse collections. Cllr Porter has taken this up and the collections have now been made.

Cllr Chinn has passed one of two courses of instruction to use the speedwatch camera; the first being online. The second is when the area coordinator makes contact and arranges local training. The link to the Police course should be advertised in the next Village News and details of those people wanting to volunteer for the speed monitoring group can be collated by Cllr Chinn. It is requested that Parishioners, in particular the members of the WI, becoming accredited so the speedwatch team can operate again.

The Community Payback Team will be operating in Bleadon on 12th

February, 19th March and 16th April. They will be using the Youth Club facilities for refreshments etc. Their first tasks will include weed clearing near the halls.

The Finance and Personnel Committee will be meeting shortly to discuss the Village Ranger vacancy.

291.8 To consider whether the Parish Council wishes to submit a request for free annual flowers from NSC for summer 2017

It was unanimously resolved to purchase 850 flowers.

Consideration will be given to hiring a van for the collection of the flowers nearer to the time.

291.9 To consider quotations received for the pollarding of the Norway Maple tree at the playing fields next to Bleadon Village Hall

It was unanimously resolved to award the contract to Rob Drinkwater.

291.10 To receive an update regarding the Churchyard walls

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

291.11 To approve the recommendations of the Finance and Personnel Committee regarding the 2017/18 budget, including the setting of the 2017/18 precept at £39,141 (the same as 2016/17 plus an additional 3% to allow for inflation)

A discussion took place regarding the proposal made by the Finance and Personnel Committee not to include a figure for the use of Coronation Hall for Parish Council meetings.

It was proposed and seconded that the budget be amended to include the figure of £300 for the use of the hall, and that this money be taken from general reserves.

It was resolved not to include a sum for the use of the Hall from in the 2017/18 budget (4 in favour, 2 against, 1 abstention).

It was unanimously resolved to approve the precept figure of £39,140.

This will mean an increase of 3% over 2016/17 and should mean that a Band D household will pay approximately £2.20 extra per year.

291.12

Finance**To approve items of expenditure**

Chq	Payee	Details	Net	VAT
300636	Taylor Thorne	Printing Bleadon News	£420	
300637	Faye Thomas	Toilet Cleaning	£125	
300638	Ian Findlay	Ranger Salary £88.60; Toilet cleaner salary £53.16; Mileage £4,95	£146.71	
300639	Anthony Jay	Clerk's Salary £690.88; Expenses – Mileage £13.50; Postage £15.36 Home working allowance:£19.50; Mobile phone £1.67; Grand total £740.91	£740.91	
300640	HMRC	PAYE and NI	£272.04	
The above invoices were paid prior to the meeting				
300641	Bin-It	Dog bin emptying	£68.98	£13.79
300642	Webglu	Website hosting	£120	£24
300643	Microshade	Anti-virus	£36	£7.20
300644	Eurooffice	2 x cabinets	£197.98	£39.60
DD	BT	Phone and broadband	£43.60	£8.72

It was unanimously resolved to approve the payments.

291.13

To receive the following Open Spaces Committee reports:

(a) Allotments

All allotment rents have now been paid.

(b) Churchyard

This was discussed earlier

(c) Footpaths & Bridleways

The broken footpath steps on Celtic way have now been mended but will need some attention by NSC during the year as their condition is deteriorating. One member of the public has been injured as a result of the defective stairs.

The footpath in the grounds of Purn Caravan Park has been reinstated. Favourable feedback has been received from some members of the public.

Cllr Chinn has written to the bus company asking that their drivers do not mount the verge in Celtic Way. He has had no reply yet. The mud caused by a recent incident has been removed by NSC.

(d) Children's Playground

A site meeting will be held with GB Sports.

(e) Newsletter

There will be three issues of the Bleadon News per year in future instead of four.

291.14 To receive the following brief holder's reports:

(1) Coronation Hall

The parking space adjacent to the hall, nearest to the road, will be removed for safety reasons. Ian Gibson was in attendance and agreed to arrange this.

291.15 **The date of the next Parish Council Meeting**

13th February 2017

