

BLEADON PARISH COUNCIL

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DRAFT Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Bleadon Parish Council held in the Coronation Hall at 7pm on Friday 23rd November 2018.

Present: Councillors Jim Baines (Chairman), Anne Selway, Gill Williams, Andy Scarisbrick, Kirsten Hemingway, Steve Hartree. District Councillor Terry Porter. Clerk: Marian Barber. 8 members of the public.

316.1 To receive any apologies for non-attendance.

Cllr Sheppard (conflict of interest)

316.2 To receive any declarations of interest in items on this agenda.

None

316.3 To invite public participation.

Two residents, members of Bleadon Acting Together (BAT) welcomed the chance to join the Parish Council (BPC) meeting and hoped that BAT and BPC could be seen to be pulling together.

Regarding North Somerset Council's consultation on the Local Plan to 2036, opened on 3rd September and closing on 10th December, a resident asked why BPC had not discussed this at previous meetings, claiming that this had prevented residents from making their views known. The Chairman explained that a response would be agreed at the next meeting, NSC had confirmed that BPC's response would be accepted on 11th December, and that residents were at liberty to respond directly to NSC. NSC's latest notice regarding this had been posted on BPC's website on the day it was received and put on the noticeboards shortly after.

(Cllr Richardson arrived at 7.05pm)

Regarding the 200 homes appeal, a resident gave details of a previous appeal inquiry regarding 79 houses on the hill. A Barrister was essential but BPC should work with NSC because their Barrister is there to win. Bleadon residents are already paying for the NSC Barrister through council tax. The Barrister can commission experts (who are then cross-examined) and, while individuals can apply to speak, it is not easy for a non-professional to come across well when being cross-examined. BAT has paid for a report and has an amount of money pledged towards a target of £9,000. BAT has obtained Rule 6 status. BPC Reserves should be spent on items for which BPC is responsible, not for this.

Residents may feel they have no voice but getting a Barrister is not the answer.

Cllr Porter explained that all the planning policy issues would be covered by NSC so what BPC/BAT/residents need to do is explain the real and human impacts on their daily lives – an almost 50% increase in the number of houses in the village, the population, the traffic, the strain on facilities – unacceptably, unsustainable. Bring out the importance of the impacts on the character of the area and the landscape, and the importance of the settlement boundary. BPC can do a statement anyway as it is a consulted body. BPC could better use its reserves for raising awareness and communicating with residents.

At this point the Chairman permitted an open discussion. In summary, the points made were:

- A resident stated that people did not know about this BPC meeting and only heard about it from BAT. Surely more people would attend if they knew.
- BAT leaflets should include contact details.
- We cannot use crowd funding or social media as an indication of the extent of support within the parish – many residents do not engage with these methods of communication.
- Councillors who are BAT members would have a conflict of interest if BAT applied to BPC for a grant towards fighting the appeal. This would make BPC inquorate. However, if BPC managed the process and the funding with a contribution from BAT then there would be no need to declare an interest (NB – Clerk to check this with ALCA).
- Councillors should be engaging with parishioners in order to understand every point of view which they then bring to the Council discussion. Councillors are free to attend groups and meetings but decisions can only be made at formal BPC meetings.
- The appeal timetable started on 8th November; deadline for comments from interested parties is 20th December. The appeal is scheduled for six days and is likely to be in June 2019 (but could be as early as April). 12 respondents from NSC and 12 from the Appellant are confirmed.
- Backwell PC paid nearly £30k for their expert at appeal – around £240 per hour – with a contribution of around £7.5k from the community.
- Cllr Porter confirmed that there was a meeting arranged with BAT and Planning Officers on 4th December – BPC is welcome to attend too. He also stated that at the appeal everyone should join together to give only body of representation from the parish – if several bodies or individuals go it alone then that will weaken Bleadon's case at the appeal. However, individual residents speaking personally (with the Inspector's permission) would probably strengthen the case.
- There was a mix of opinion from the members of the public present – all were keen to see all bodies working together with all residents of Bleadon. Some thought reserves should not be spent on this, others were in favour of a capped amount being proposed.
- It was confirmed that BPC is concerned with the whole parish of Bleadon, not just the residents within the settlement boundary.
- It was confirmed that the Bleadon Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire will be circulated in January and will give those residents who feel unable to speak publicly in favour of controversial topics a voice (as they can be anonymous if they wish). Cllr Porter had arranged a meeting about Neighbourhood Planning with Hutton and Locking on 26th November.

The Chairman reinstated Standing Orders.

- 316.4 To Approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th November 2018. APPROVED.**
- 316.5 To Consider how to respond to the Planning Appeal regarding the proposed development of 200 homes on land between Bleadon Road and the A370.**
 It was **AGREED** to defer this item to the next agenda in order to received feedback from the meeting on 4th December.
 A **RESOLUTION** was proposed: **That this Council works together with BAT, Villagers and Bleadon Bob to fight this appeal.**
Proposed: Cllr Scarisbrick. Seconded: Cllr Baines. CARRIED.
- 316.6 To Consider using Parish Council reserves to appoint a planning expert for Rule 6 Status.**
AGREED to defer this item to the next meeting.
A member of the public recommended reading about Rule 6.
- 316.7 To Note the date of the next Parish Council meeting.**
 The next meeting will be on Monday 10th December 2018 at 7pm in the Coronation Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.33pm.