

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th January 2019
in the Village Hall, Bathampton**

Present: Cllrs M. Brennan (MB) (Chair), S. Andrews (SA), G. Ardrey (GA), J. Bird (JB), J. Helps (JH), J. King (JK) and D. Mayo (DM).

1. Apologies. There were none.

2. Declarations of interest

DM declared an interest in item 7 - the proposed budget for 2019/20. As incoming Treasurer for the village show he had an interest in grants to the village show and would not take part in that discussion.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on ~~15th November 2018~~ 13th December 2018 (Correction made & initialled during the meeting held on 21.02.19) had been circulated. It was noted that SA had not sent his apologies until after the meeting because of email issues. The minutes were unanimously approved and adopted.

4. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

a) CIL presentation slides

These had been received and circulated.

b) Jubilee Gardens information board – taken under item 12(c)

5. Review of actions carried forward and not covered elsewhere on the agenda

Action

a) Remote file storage

After consideration of some of the options and their respective advantages and disadvantages in terms of, e.g., data security, it was agreed to trial using *Dropbox* for file storage and sharing. The Clerk would take this forward.

Clerk
Actions C/F

b) Analysis of CAZ responses from village residents – taken under item 10(g)

c) Community Empowerment monitoring – taken under item 8(a).

d) Plum Trees by allotments – taken under item 9(c).

e) Highway review. Carried forward.

SA/JB/LK
Actions C/F

f) Respond to resident's enquiry about mirrors at road junctions.

SA reported on discussions with Highways and B&NES about installing mirrors to increase visibility at road junctions. The guidance given was not in favour as they have been shown to increase risk and SA agreed to feed this back to the relevant resident.

SA
Actions C/F

6. Finance

a) Financial report for December 2018

This had been circulated previously. It was unanimously approved and adopted, and then signed by the Chair.

It was noted that under the terms of the Council’s Financial Regulations (November 2016), and as the payments had been approved at the start of the year, the pay details for the handyman and the clerk, along with other pre-approved expenditure such as street light maintenance and energy, did not need to be documented and approved at each meeting.

**Clerk
Ongoing**

b) Expenditure report for January 2019

In addition to the pre-approved expenditure the following payments were approved.

| <u>Supplier</u> | <u>Service/ Goods</u> | <u>Cost (£s)</u> | <u>VAT (£s)</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| GB Sport & leisure | Repairs to swings | 319.00 | + 12.83 |
| SLCC | 2019 membership | 122.00 | + 0.0 |
| SLCC | ICLA registration | 99.00 | + 19.80 |
| Viking | Printer toner | 156.76 | + 31.35 |

c) Clerk’s report

The Clerk reported that she was now a signatory for the Council’s current account.

The Clerk drew the meetings attention to the guidance from NALC which suggested the Clerk should not be a signatory. It was agreed that the council’s current practice of having the Clerk as one of two signatories for pre-approved expenditure and excluding all payments to the Clerk, was in conformance with the council’s financial regulations and should continue.

It was also agreed that this practice would be kept under review along with all the Council’s other systems and procedures.

**Clerk
Ongoing**

There was a short discussion about the timing of payments to parish council staff. It was again agreed to continue with current practice.

The Clerk was asked to follow up on e-payments with the Council’s current banker, Barclays, and to look into accounts which might earn more interest.

**Clerk
Actions C/F**

7. 2019/20 Budget

The Chair explained how the proposed budget had been drafted. The meeting considered each item and the following points were noted.

Income

- The precept should be left at £23,000 for 2019/20, the seventh year without a change.
- Allotment income would be down in 2019/20 compared to the previous year as there would be some vacant allotments. This might incur expenditure to ensure allotment plots remained viable for future use.
- Bathampton had received one CIL instalment during 2018/19 and could reasonably assume it would receive the second during 2019/20. The due date for the third and final instalment was unknown. It might be made during 2019/20 but it could not be relied upon.

Expenditure

- It was assumed that the Community Empowerment Grant of £553 would be fully spent during 2018/19.
- The cost of the street light replacement would fall in one year if the work was to be done cost-effectively and this would result in a deficit due to the timing mismatch to the receipt of the CIL money.
- Leisure & Amenities should show a contingency of £1,000 as work to parts of the surface area was likely to be needed. This included the entrance to the fenced off play area.
- Cllr Helps had discussed the cost of planting with the suppliers. It could not reasonably be reduced in the short term and should be left at the level of previous years, i.e., £75.00.
- The grant to the village show to be increased to £1,000 as requested. This reflected the importance of the show to the village as a community activity and that 2019 was the show's 50th anniversary.
- The grant to FOBMR be left at £450 in the draft budget, but the Clerk should go back to FOBMR and ask if the contribution from Batheaston could be increased in line, e.g., with its greater population.

**Clerk
Done**

The result was a proposed deficit budget for 2019/20 which the meeting considered contrary to good practice. During the following discussion it was also decided that:

- It was better to set a deficit budget with a planned overspend, knowing the council had the resources to cover a shortfall, than to overspend which might look like the council was not managing its financial commitments.
- The CIL funding was intended to fund enhancements to the village infrastructure such as the street light replacement, but it came to Bathampton over a different time scale to the corresponding expenditure.

- The reserves were there to fund the delivery of services and amenities for the village and would fund if needed, e.g., unforeseen expenditure for Leisure & Amenities.

On the above grounds the budget for 2019/20 was approved.

**Clerk
Done**

8. Community Empowerment Grant monitoring

a) Returns from Bathampton

DM reported the funding had almost been fully spent and he would get the required information to the Clerk as soon as was possible.

**DM/Clerk
Done**

b) Returns from FoBMR

The council approved the returns submitted by FOBMR for submission by the Clerk.

**Clerk
Done**

9. Allotments

a) Allotment leasing agreement

It was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Helps would review the agreement and bring it back to the council for approval. The aim was to make clearer to allotment holders the council's expectations in line with the accepted definition of an allotment as articulated by for instance the Allotment Association. Cllr Helps and the Clerk were asked to consider best practice elsewhere when reviewing the agreement.

**Clerk/JH
Actions C/F**

b) Maintenance of hedgerows, trees etc. See item (c) below.

c) Overhanging plum trees

At a previous meeting the council had discussed the plum trees, possibly self-seeded, growing adjacent to the footpath shared by the residents of Holcombe Lane and backing onto the allotments causing some of them, especially Plot 2, to be in heavy shade. At the same time, it had considered the feedback from a resident who asserted he had planted the trees and strongly objected to them being cut back.

The meeting noted that the council could take out and/or reduce the height of some of the trees on the path side, whilst respecting the concerns of the resident. It was agreed that this was not a suitable task for the handyman. Noting that the current holder of Plot 2 had accepted a move to another plot, it was decided to retire Plot 2 at least temporarily until the matter was resolved.

It was decided to wait until after the meeting of Cllr Helps and allotment holders on 26th January before considering further action. Work to reduce any overhanging trees and large hedges around the allotments could be part of a bundle of "tree work" which might include the plum trees.

**Clerk/JH
Done**

d) Plot 25

Cllr Helps reported that this allotment looked like it was being cultivated as an extension to a resident’s garden with trees and shrubs that could grow to a significant size. This was in apparent contravention of the approved allotment leasing agreement. Cllr Helps was keen to encourage the holder to relocate the trees and shrubs whilst they were still relatively easy to move. This would avoid problems for the holder when they relinquished the plot and possibly any future holder of the plot.

It was agreed that this would be raised with the holder at a meeting on 28th January 2019, arranged previously to discuss a number of issues.

MB/JB/JH
Agenda
10(a)

e) B&NES designated Local Green Space

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a member of B&NES asking if the Bathampton allotments could be included in a submission which would see the allotments being designated as a Local Green Space. This was part of wider strategy. The allotments had been given to the village by Harbutts and it was not clear what this would mean in practice. Potentially it offered greater protection against development. The given turn-around time was extremely limited and the Clerk had liaised with Cllrs Brennan, Helps and King. It had been agreed to allow Bathampton allotments to be included and the Clerk had notified B&NES accordingly.

10. Ongoing Items

a) 19 Down Lane. Covered under 9(d) above.

b) Avon Wildlife, the Meadows and Cycle Track

Safe non-vehicular access was being progressed but there was nothing to report.

c) Highway review. Covered under item 5 above.

d) Illegal encampments

Cllr Ardrey reported that B&NES Enforcement would not act in relation to the Dry Arch encampment until probate was granted.

Regarding the encampment by the western boundary between the canal and railway, the Clerk reported that she had not yet undertaken the Land Registry searches as actioned at the last meeting. Cllr Andrews reported that the C&RT had taken an interest and may act. It was agreed to wait for the C&RT response.

It was noted that there were a number of small encampments springing up around the canal and railway, in and around some legitimate small holdings. It was agreed to monitor the development of such sites whilst noting that Bathampton Parish Council was limited in what it could do – it was dependent on enforcement by B&NES or C&RT.

e) Network Rail

Nothing to report. It was to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

**Clerk
Done**

f) Street lights

The Chair reported that B&NES had contacted the landowner who had agreed to get a local farmer to clear the area around the light near no.1 Devonshire Rd and the footpath.

The Clerk was asked to contact B&NES to see if the landowner would also authorize clearing of the stream and its edges to alleviate flooding of the field, and reduce or removing a dead/dying tree on the corner of Bathampton Lane and Devonshire Rd. The tree had some large branches which were considered a potential risk to people and property.

**Clerk
Done**

Cllr Helps advised that the light near the park needed replacing for safety and security reasons and Cllr King confirmed that residents wanted the light on St George’s Hill replaced.

The meeting agreed that nothing could be done until the site around Devonshire Rd. / Bathampton Lane had been cleared if the work was to be done as cost-effectively as possible. The Clerk was asked to update SSE reaffirming the council’s intention to undertake the work, and local residents who had contacted her about this light.

**Clerk
Done**

g) CAZ

It was agreed that an analysis of residents’ responses was necessary if the Parish Council was to respond promptly to B&NES as plans for the CAZ evolved. The key was to look for any recurring theme in the responses of residents and the Clerk was asked to begin the process.

**Clerk
Done**

LK offered to work with the Clerk on this.

**~~LK~~ / Clerk
Done**

It was also agreed that the Council could not accurately represent the wide diversity of residents’ views. It could only try and influence the CAZ proposals to ensure they had appropriately considered the needs of Bathampton and any consequent impact - good or bad – on the village.

Regarding the data from traffic counters and pollution monitors in the village the Chair reported that B&NES had advised that the data would be available on different parts of the B&NES website as different times later in the year. The Clerk would set up reminders to retrieve this data in case Cllr Brennan was not notified automatically.

~~Clerk~~
Done

11. Newsletter

The Chair advised that newsletter entries from Group leads would be wanted by the last Friday of the month, 25th. It was agreed the Chair's entry should cover the planned street light replacement, a significant expenditure with which the village got no support from B&NES; the coffee shop; ongoing work relating to the CAZ; and, the local elections in May including an appeal for new Councillors.

~~MB/SA/~~
~~LK/DM~~
Done

12. Group reports

a) Planning & Conservation

The report had been circulated. In addition to applications listed in the report an application for an extension to a property on Hantone Hill had been received.

Over the last few months B&NES had not always notified the council about the outcomes of planning applications. The Clerk was asked to follow this up.

Clerk
Done

b) Highways

The detailed analysis of traffic speed on the Warminster Rd as forwarded by a resident was considered. Cllr Andrews would find out the details of the current contact at Highways England and forward the document.

SA
Done

The Clerk was asked to thank the resident for the excellent analysis, advise that it would be shared with Highways England and ask if he would be willing to help the council with data analysis in other areas.

Clerk
Done

Cllr Andrews reported that the light opposite no. 46 Warminster Rd continued to be on 24 hours a day. He would write to Highways England to ask for action and encourage local residents to do the same.

SA
Action C/F

c) Footpaths

Jubilee Gardens information board. The C&RT had a number of conditions which Cllr Andrews had acknowledged by letter. It was agreed that Cllr Andrews would liaise with Cllr Mayo who would take this forward with the C&RT and the footpaths group who were funding the board.

SA/DM
Action C/F

Cllr Mayo reported he was due to meet the Cotswold Wardens to discuss the 2019 programme of work.

Cllr Andrews advised the fuel spillage on the canal that he had reported seemed to have dispersed.

d) Leisure & Amenities

Cllr Helps said she would advertise the vacant allotments in the newsletter and ask B&NES how they promote vacant allotments.

JSH

The Clerk was asked to see how Batheaston and Bathford advertise vacant allotments, if applicable, and if they could advertise there were allotments available at Bathampton to anyone on their waiting lists.

Clerk

Done

e) Communications, Social Media & the Website. Covered elsewhere.

f) Policy & Finance. Covered elsewhere.

13. Open Forum

a) It was agreed to monitor informally use of the George car park.

All

b) There was no news about the double lines at the top of Down Lane. The consultation with residents had not taken place.

**Agenda
11 (b)**

c) Mr Fears had reported that the weir was leaking. B&NES were trying to establish who was responsible for dealing with this.

**Matter
arising**

14. Date of Next Meeting. Thursday 21st February 2019, 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:35

Signed:

Chair

Date: 21st February 2019