

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HINTON BLEWETT PARISH COUNCIL HELD  
ON WEDNESDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2015 IN THE VILLAGE HALL  
Draft until adopted by Council and signed by the Chairman**

**Present:** Cllrs Mrs E Brimmell (Chairman), Mrs C Arnold, D Elliott, D Huffadine, M Jay and J Layzell.

The Minutes were taken by Mrs E Merko (Clerk).

**Public Participation:** There was one member of the public present. A number of highways issues were raised.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.45pm.

**15/32 Apologies:** Apologies were received from Ward Cllr Warren.

**15/33 Adoption of Minutes:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting and the Planning Meeting held on 19th May 2015 were agreed as an accurate record. The minutes were proposed and agreed for adoption.

**15/34 Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan:** the précis of the Character Assessment for inclusion in the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan was discussed and agreed.

**15/35 Parishioner awareness and involvement in parish matters:** the Parish Council was disappointed to read the perception of some parishioners that the Parish Council “made their own decisions about the Placemaking scheme in isolation to the villagers”. The process for putting together the Placemaking Plan was discussed including the frequent consultation with and the involvement of parishioners as well as the opportunities to air the plans in public at Parish Council meetings. The Parish Council confirmed that it endeavoured to be as open and transparent as possible in its work and reiterated that parishioners were welcome at every meeting of the Parish Council including planning meetings. There were now a considerable number of households on the Parish email list and it was agreed that the invitation to join the email list should be reissued to households.

Under B&NES Core Strategy Hinton Blewett had been allocated 10-15 dwellings to be found outside the Housing Development Boundary and not as infill. In the Placemaking Plan the Parish Council had been required to identify every available site within the village envelope and give reasons for support or objection to potential development. The draft Placemaking Plan, to be adopted in 2016, included a character assessment which would become a material consideration in future development. The parish was also part of the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan which, if confirmed following a referendum, would be adopted in Spring 2016. When adopted both Plans would help to mitigate the B&NES allocation and substantially protect the parish from future inappropriate development. Without the Placemaking Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan future development could just be foisted on the parish. It was hoped that all parishioners would come to realise how important these two Plans would be in providing protection for the village. Ultimately planning decisions were made by the Planning Authority – B&NES, in compliance with planning legislation including the recent National Planning Policy Framework which had few controls for the protection of rural areas.

**ACTION 15/35/1:** to put together and deliver leaflets re-encouraging parishioners to join the mailing list, to display on the noticeboard and to put a note in the Parish News.

Signed..... (Chairman) Dated..... Page..... 1

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**15/36 Village fete:** it was proposed and agreed that Barbury could be used for the Village fete, provisional date 5<sup>th</sup> September, to be organised by the PCC and covered by PCC insurance. An event form and risk assessment for the event would be required by the Parish Council.

**15/37 Illegal parking adjacent to the Barbury:** Despite the recent No Parking sign at the top of Litton Lane it was noted that the junction was still regularly obstructed by illegally parked vehicles belonging to patrons of the pub. Reference was made to the Highway Code which requires vehicles to be parked at least 10m from a junction. Concern was expressed over the safety of cars using the junction and of the possibility that emergency vehicles could be prevented from turning down Litton Lane. It was agreed that a letter would be written to the managers of The Ring O'Bells politely requesting that the matter be addressed again. In the event that the matter was not addressed the Parish Council would discuss the issue with the Police.

**ACTION 15/37/1:** letter to be sent to Ring O Bells and copied to the Brewery.

**15/38 Road signage:** it was agreed that current road signage informing that Widcombe Hill was unsuitable for large vehicles was inadequate and had resulted in difficult manoeuvres for large vehicles. It was agreed that BANES would be informed of the issue and that additional signage at Webstile Farm near the junction with Coley Hill would be suggested.

**ACTION 15/38/1:** to request additional "not suitable for large vehicles signage" from BANES.

**15/39 Financial Regulations:** following review of the new model it was proposed and agreed to adopt the Financial Regulations.

**15/40 Effectiveness of internal financial controls:** following review it was suggested that the internal audit of the accounts be added to the list. With the amendment above, it was proposed and agreed to confirm that the Internal Financial Controls were satisfactory.

**15/41 Asset Register:** There was concern that assets that had been donated were listed with a value of £0. The advice from ALCA was that the purchase price should be £0 if it was donated. The Register would be annotated to explain the asset value of each item given. It was noted that the asset value was different from the insurance value, a record of which was also kept. It was suggested that the Village projector should be added to the list of assets. With the changes listed above, it was proposed and agreed to accept the updated Asset Register for 2015.

**15/42 Clerk's broadband and phone expenses:** it was agreed that HMRC's recommended homeworking allowance would be paid to the Clerk in place of the current calculation. It was proposed and agreed that the Clerk's homeworking allowance be paid by monthly standing order at £18pcm from August 2015. To be reviewed in 12 months' time.

**15/43 Monthly accounts, bank reconciliation and budget variances:** The Finance Monitor confirmed at the meeting that the bank reconciliation was correct. There were no variances to report. It was proposed and agreed that the accounts report to 30th June 2015 was a true reflection of the bank account.

**15/44 Authorisation of payments:**

Cheques

£285 Came & Company – insurance premium for 2015-16 (chq 420)

£15 Martin Currell for fitting No Parking sign at Litton Lane (chq 421)

£2324 GB Sport & Leisure for swings and installation at Playing Field (+VAT) (chq 422)

Signed..... (Chairman) Dated..... Page.....2

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£600 Gary Filer for footpaths clearance 2015 (chq 423)

The Council was pleased to note that the insurance premium had been reduced on request and even beat the lower premium that had been considered.

#### Standing Orders

Clerk's salary - NJC salary scale point 16, pro rata for 6 hours per week

Clerk's internet and broadband / homeworking allowance

It was proposed and agreed to approve the payments. It was confirmed that cheques would be signed by Cllrs Mrs Brimmell and Huffadine outside the meeting when the cheque book was available.

The following income was noted:

£616.17 BANES payment of footpath grant for 2015/16

#### **15/45 Highways and Footpaths**

- It was noted that the hedge at Coley Reservoir had been cut back and that two overhanging trees had been removed.
- It was reported that a kerbstone on the Barbury had been dislodged. It was suggested that BANES be approached to undertake the otherwise the Council's usual contractor would be asked to complete the repair.
- Water running down Coley Hill was a suspected leak and had been reported.
- The large pothole on the gravel area of the Barbury was noted and it was agreed that it should be filled in.

**ACTION 15/45/1:** request BANES Highways repair the broken kerbstone on the Barbury

#### **15/46 Dog Fouling:**

The Dog Warden had advised of the following points:

- a) Straying – must be reported to Council Connect (01225 39 40 41 council\_connect@bathnes.gov.uk) by the person witnessing it with the date, time and name of dog owner. The witness's name would remain confidential.
- b) Fouling – as above but witness would need to be prepared to make a statement when reporting which would be used as evidence in the event of a prosecution.
- c) Fouling taking place at a regular time of day would be investigated by the dog warden in an attempt to witness it herself.

The Parish Council reiterated what an important issue this was for the Parish and that residents should continue to be vigilant and report offences.

#### **15/47 Items for information from the Clerk**

##### **a) Actions Report:**

- i. With reference to the response from BANES Electoral Services the Electoral Commission had been contacted. The Electoral Commission had informed that it was looking to reform practices and asked that observations were reported to the LA. It was suggested that BANES be contacted again with reference to the discussion with the Electoral Commission.
- ii. The Council was disappointed at the lack of response from Butcombe Brewery to the letter regarding the appearance of the Conservation Area. It was requested that a letter now be sent to the new owners of Butcombe Brewery: The Liberation Group to make contact, to reiterate comments already made regarding the appearance and

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importance of the Conservation Area, to stress the importance of the pub to the village as a local amenity and to suggest a meeting with Councillors when the owners were in the area.

- iii. It was noted that the Police had now made contact with two owners of 4x4 vehicles that were photographed at Hollowmarsh Lane to inform them of the law of trespass. Work would begin on repairing the damage to the lane and progress on a permanent barrier was likely to be implemented in stages as PRow finances allowed.

**ACTION 15/47/1:** write to Electoral Services at BANES with reference to current reform by the Electoral Commission and reiterate that a single venue, in Bath, for delivery of nomination papers was not satisfactory and ask that consideration is given to this in light of the Electoral Commission's reforms.

**ACTION 15/47/2:** letter to be sent to The Liberation Group as detailed above.

- b) **Vacancy for a Councillor:** there not having been sufficient time within the legal framework to co-opt to the vacancy in July it was agreed that the decision on co-option would be made at the next meeting of the Parish Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The Clerk would complete the necessary official processes.
- c) **Annual Return:** it was reported that a query had been received regarding the Annual Return and that it would therefore be likely that an additional charge would be incurred.
- d) **Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan:** the options document was circulated for information. The document was currently out for consultation. Leaflets would be delivered to all houses in the Parish informing residents of the open public consultation through July, August and September as well as a number of drop in sessions.
- e) **Commonwealth Flag Day:** support was given for the raising of the Commonwealth Flag again as per last year.
- f) **Pension requirements:** the information regarding automatic enrolment was noted and it was asked that the item be reviewed at a meeting in 12 months' time.
- g) **Training for Councillors:** the opportunity offered by ALCA was noted and it was agreed that this would be arranged for October/November once a new Councillor was co-opted with a preference for a Monday-Wednesday evening.
- h) **Outgoing Councillors:** Thanks were recorded for the work of retiring Councillors Grant, Barraclough and Whitmarsh; with particular note given to the continued care by Mr Grant of the playing field grass cutting.

**The meeting closed at 9.15pm.**