

WEST HARPTREE PARISH COUNCIL

**Provisional Minutes to be approved at the next Parish Council meeting.**

Page 58 of 21/22

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 starting at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mr R Ireland (Chairman), Mr P Hutton (Vice-Chairman), Mr G Joyce, Mr J Mitchell and Mr P Wood.

APOLOGIES: Mr C Gay, Mrs R Wakeley and Mr D Wood.

Two members of the public attended.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record. The minutes were proposed and seconded and unanimously agreed for adoption.

**Min. 3959 – Matters Arising from the Minutes – None.**

**Min. 3960 – Urgent Business as agreed by the Chair**

Clerk's Resignation – The Chairman reported that he had accepted the Clerk's formal resignation with effect from 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. He would look into the process of appointing a new Clerk from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

Insurance Renewal – Three proposals had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed and seconded with all other Councillors in favour of accepting the Zurich 3 year long term agreement with an option for a further two years at the same price, which was the most competitively priced like for like cover.

**Min. 3961 – Correspondence**

Please see Appendix 1.

**Min. 3962 – Parish Council Website**

It was reported that due to a server upgrade the Parish Council website would not be as flexible as at present. Three options were proposed,

1. To start again from scratch ourselves,
2. To use a local supplier/web builder, or
3. Continue with the current system, manually updating documents as necessary.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to continue with the existing very low cost system. If the Website became unsatisfactory long term, it could be reviewed at any time, subject to budgetary constraints.

**Min. 3963 – Memorial Hall**

Work was continuing to improve the upstairs area. Further grants had been awarded, the first from the Ward Councillor's Empowerment Fund. Thanks, were expressed to him for his help, and the other from Tesco, both of which would go towards providing a sound system upstairs.

**Min. 3964 - Highways**

20mph Speed Limit – A very successful public meeting had taken place on 7<sup>th</sup> February. The Ward Councillor spoke about the story so far, the consultation for Phase I and aspirations for Phase II, and B&NES Senior Highways Engineer explained the scope of Phase I. Villagers were encouraged to submit positive comments via the consultation process which would run until 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022. From feedback, it was noted that the consultation process was not easy to complete.

Phase II ideas and suggestions from the public would be collated by the Parish Council.

Wessex Water, Sewerage Network Upgrades – At the same public meeting two representatives from Wessex Water presented their plan to upgrade the West Harptree sewerage network during April and May 2022. Most surprisingly, all work would be carried out through existing manholes which would minimise disruption on the road network and to the environment.

A question and answer session took place after each presentation.

A368 Resurfacing – It was noted that the Ward Councillor was pushing for this to be included in next year's budget.

Pothole – A pothole on Bristol Road, near The Linney would be reported.

**Min. 3965 - Recreation Ground**

The play equipment was in good order.

It was agreed that a climbing frame, suitable for the 3-10 year age group would be a good addition to the existing equipment. A bid for grant funding would be explored.

Work to the Recreation Ground fence and replacement gate was scheduled for this week.

**Min. 3966 – Bus Shelter**

The Bus Shelter roof replacement had stalled due to the chosen contractor reneging on his contract. Further quotations had been requested. It was proposed and seconded to accept a quotation from Richard Maggs who would carry out the work as soon as possible.

**Min. 3967 – Local Plan Partial Update Consultation**

A Webinar would be attended on 1<sup>st</sup> March with a report at the next meeting.

**Min. 3968 – Chew Valley Climate and Nature Emergency**

It was reported that the Chew Valley Climate and Nature Emergency Group were considering amalgamating with B&NES to enable a more joined up approach.

**Min. 3969 – Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II**

Councillors would liaise with the Memorial Hall Committee who were leading the event. The matter was ongoing.

**Min. 3970 - Community Infrastructure Levy**

Projects underway included, supporting the 20mph speed project, replacing the Bus Shelter roof and fencing in the Recreation Ground. The purchase of additional play equipment was being considered subject to matched grant funding.

**Min. 3971 – Ward Councillor's Report**

Please see Appendix 2.

Initials ....

**Min. 3972 – Planning Matters**

Notification of decision

- a. Planning application 21/05439/FUL, Westleaze, The Street – Erection of 1.5 storey garage extension to form annexe. PERMIT.
  
- b. Planning application 21/05362/COND, Orchard Cottage, Ridge Lane – Discharge of condition 13 (Materials – Submission of Schedule and Samples) of application 21/00050/FUL (Erection of a two storey 3/4 bedroom dwelling, car port for 2 cars and additional parking for 4 cars following demolition of existing cottage). CONDITION DIS-CHARGED.
  
- c. Planning application 20/04595/FUL, Land to the South of Widcombe Lodge, South Widcombe, Hinton Blewett – Erection of dwelling, covered parking, implement store and formation of vehicular access. REFUSE.

**Min. 3973 - Finance**

The agreed new insurance policy invoice totalling £363.10 would be paid prior to the next meeting.

**Min. 3974 – Meetings attended – None.**

**Min. 3975 – Items for the Information of the Clerk**

Electricity Contract – The electricity contract had been renewed for a 24 month period. SSE remained the cheapest supplier.

**Min. 3976 - Future Meetings**

Date of the next meeting: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 starting at 7.30 p.m.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman .....

Date Signed .....

## Appendix 1

### Min. 3961 – Correspondence

#### January 2022

1. Sunshine Gym at Broxap brochure.
2. Rural Services Network – The Rural Bulletin, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
3. B&NES – Weekly Planning List No. 2.
4. B&NES – Street Works 11/01/22 – 17/01/22.
5. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 21/04323/FUL, East Harptree.
6. Lydia Livingston – Bus Shelter.
7. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 22/00080/VAR, East Harptree.
8. B&NES – Parish Precept Acknowledgement.
9. Ann Robson Trust – New article.
10. B&NES, Fix my Street – Pothole resolved.
11. ICO – Latest News.
12. B&NES – Weekly e-newsletter, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
13. B&NES – Bus Support Service.
14. B&NES – Transport Planning, Journey to Net Zero.
15. Rural Services Network – The Rural Bulletin, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
16. B&NES – Weekly Planning List No. 3.
17. B&NES – Street Works 18/01/22 – 25/01/22.
18. Gallagher – Insurance quotation.
19. CPRE – Director’s Bulletin.
20. Zurich – Insurance quotation.
21. B&NES – New Community Website.
22. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 21/05160/FUL, Hinton Blewett.
23. B&NES – Weekly e-newsletter, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022.
24. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 21/5433/FUL and 21/05483, Compton Martin.
25. B&NES – Transport Planning, Journey to Net Zero – Public Consultation January 2022.
26. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 22/00080/VAR, East Harptree.
27. Cllr D Wood – West Harptree 20 mph proposal.
28. Rural Services Network – The Rural Bulletin, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
29. B&NES – Weekly Planning List No. 4.
30. B&NES – Street Works 25/01/22 – 01/02/22.
31. Utility Aid – Quotation.
32. Community Action Suffolk – Unable to quote.
33. Avon Fire and Rescue Service – Consultation.
34. SSE – Quotation.

#### February 2022

1. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 22/00080/COND, East Harptree.
2. Gallagher – Communities Newsletter.
3. Bristol Airport – Your Airport News.
4. Rural Services Network – Bulletin Special, Compelling Rural Health & Care Evidence released.
5. B&NES, Development Management – Notification of decision, 21/05439/FUL, Westleaze. PERMIT.
6. B&NES – Weekly Planning List No. 5.
7. B&NES – Street Works 01/02/22 – 07/02/22.
8. Nemesis Fireworks – Professional Firework Displays 2022.
9. Rural Services Network – Rural Funding Digest, February 2022.
10. BHIB Insurance – Quotation.
11. B&NES – Weekly e-newsletter, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022.
12. Creative Play – New Products brochure.
13. ALCA – In Short, February 2022.
14. B&NES – New date for Chew Valley Area Forum, Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 6 p.m.
15. Wessex Water – Whistley Lane ownership.
16. Richard Maggs – Bus Shelter Quotation.
17. B&NES, Development Management – Notification of decision, 21/05362/COND, Orchard Cottage. CONDITION DISCHARGED.
18. Cllr D Wood – Report.
19. Rural Services Network – The Rural Bulletin, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
20. B&NES – Weekly Planning List No. 6.
21. B&NES – Street Works 08/02/22 – 15/02/22.
22. My Parish Council – Website information.
23. Andrew Tovey – Fencing update.
24. B&NES, Planning Notifications – 22/00304/FUL, East Harptree.
25. B&NES, Planning Policy – Parish/Town Councils virtual briefing on 1<sup>st</sup> March, The B&NES New Local Plan.
26. B&NES, Development Management – Notification of decision 20/04595/FUL, Land to the South of Widcombe Lodge, South Widcombe, Hinton Blewett. REFUSE.

**Appendix 2**

**Min. 3971 – Ward Councillor's Report**

**Dated 8/2/22**

**WHPC Speeding Phase One:**

Was very happy with the public meeting and thank you to WHPC for organising it and for the messaging from Richard. The line on all pulling together and agreeing each stage as it comes is a very strong idea and I think it will give us best success.

I have asked Stefan to send the consultation details to Jan for local distribution.

**WHPC Speeding Phase Two:**

The £10k contribution to Phase Two is in the final budget paperwork that was published on 3/2/22. This will be finally voted on 10/2/22 at Cabinet and 15/2/22 at Council.

It would be good to discuss how is best to build a local consensus on what Phase 2 should look like. This may come around sooner than we think so it would be good to get a head start on this.

I've not finished my Ward Councillor Survey yet (hope to this month) and will send any comments from that to Jan that are relevant to this to be included with her list.

**Road resurfacing:**

As reported at the public meeting I've secured funding for full resurfacing between the village and the lake towards Bishop Sutton. I am pushing strongly for the road through the village to be resurfaced at the same time as this. But no guarantees on that at this stage. But if it happens, I'm keen to ensure that Phase Two and any resurfacing happen in a co-ordinated way.

**Kerbside Recycling:**

I took away the unacceptable two missed collections of parts of West Harptree over the new year period. The fair points were made that a) extra tonnages are predictable, b) that rounds can be reversed so two misses don't happen twice in a row and that c) Covid is a known quantity and not an acceptable excuse.

The normal response to missed collection of part of the round (when the recycling truck is full) is normally either: a) they come back the next day or b) a different vehicle comes to finish the round. The garden recycling crews are used as backup during Christmas and New Year period to help mitigate the predictable extra tonnages over the period.

We also make use of agency loaders and drivers due to the (historically predictable) sickness rates over winter and the (recently predictable) Covid self-isolation rates over the winter months. "Because of Covid" is a lazy and frustrating explanation for problems with services at this stage, but there are some genuine explanations (not good excuses) around this. The main impact of Covid is shortage of labour. The drive toward home delivery has attracted lots of HGV and LGV drivers to the private sector (Amazon trucks and warehouses, etc), along with lack of availability of drivers from the continent. This has led to a nationwide (and well publicised) shortage of drivers. The government relaxed the immigration rules for drivers but only until the end of December, which was a short-term retail solution rather than a longer-term local Council solution. The government also tried to increase HGV driving test capacity (which had slowed down during Covid) but capacity was limited to one driving test per month for the Council. We are regularly short of 7 drivers and requests

drivers from agencies all the time.

Things I've done to try to recruit and retain drivers:

- Employ loaders on a 'loader-to-driver' contract, to train non-drivers to drive our trucks
- Financial incentives for staying with or joining the Council
- Proactively selling the benefits of working for the Council
- Reducing the number of drivers who also need to act as loaders, by employing more loaders

What I'm doing to improve the accuracy and resilience of kerbside collection services:

- Recycling had skeleton staff that meant even at the best of times staff shortages would compromise the service. I've employed an additional 13 loaders (net) to bring most of our crews up to three person crews rather than two person crews. This improves speed, accuracy, supervision and the overall numbers in the service which helps when staff are sick or self-isolating
- Kept this investment in the service in the new budget for 22/23
- Introducing in-cab technology (currently in waste trucks, introducing to recycling trucks soon) which digitises rounds and reduces the number of missed houses and missed assisted collections

I'm committed to the resident experience of recycling being excellent. I'm proud that our recycling rate is a record high (against a national drop in recycling rates during Covid) and I do not want residents to lose patience with recycling services and stop using it, and therefore see recycling rates drop.

Jon has also sent me a separate email with some excellent suggestions which I am taking forward separately.

#### **Ward Empowerment Fund:**

As mentioned at the last meeting I intended to make an application on behalf of the village hall. This was successful for £250 to help upgrade the sound system.

#### **WECA Spatial Development Strategy (SDS):**

The government has allocated 105,000 houses to be built in the WECA area between 2022-2042. B&NES allocation of this is 15,000 houses. This is higher than the 12,000 we were originally told, but much lower than revised government plans of 24,000 that we negotiated down to 15,000. The SDS sets out the housing numbers and the broad allocation of where housing should be built. This is primarily on brownfield sites and on the edges of heavy populated areas where there are jobs and public transport and houses can be more affordable. This feeds into and guides our Full Local Plan, which is important to keep building the right number of houses that stops speculative developments in our villages. (Developers go to court and say 'not enough houses have been built, so we should build where we want to help the numbers' as has happened in villages in the Chew Valley in the past).

There is also provision for 'non-strategic housing' which is usually the houses that are 'scattergun' applied to giving most villages in B&NES a housing allocation over the period.

There is likely to be a Special Cabinet Meeting in April to approve or otherwise the WECA SDS, but a paper came to Informal Cabinet this morning for an initial discussion. I kicked off hugely about the 'scattergun to villages' approach on the grounds of sustainability and village greenfield housing not being affordable. I advocated for an approach that said B&NES should ask villages if they want housing and what type of housing, not forcing allocation on villages where they do not have lots of jobs and excellent public transport.

#### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee:**

Below is the extract from guidance about street parties. However West Harptree's usual street closure is an unusual case so I have asked for a named contact that Jan can liaise with. This is [Lynda Deane@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:Lynda_Deane@bathnes.gov.uk) (Senior Manager, Events)

"Street Parties:

It is anticipated that residents will wish to hold their own street parties to celebrate the Jubilee with their neighbours. Whilst we await guidance from the Lord Lieutenant's office, Bath and North East Somerset Council already have a policy on our website which details:

- Small, private street parties are simple to organise and generally do not include activities which require a licence, such as selling alcohol, or providing certain types of entertainment. A street party is different to a public event in the following ways:

1. It is for residents and neighbours only
2. Any publicity is aimed at residents only
3. It is self-organised
4. It involves closing residential roads only
5. Public Liability insurance is optional but recommended. The organiser must accept responsibility for possible claims if they don't have it

Residents will be required to contact the Traffic Management Team to request a road closure, which is free of charge, where these events are not for profit and meets the criteria below:

1. The event affects a cul-de-sac rather than a through road
2. The closure is of a small residential road where the divert route is considered to be obvious to local motorists and diversion signage is not required
3. The event is organised by residents of the street and is not a commercial event organised for commercial gain.

The web page guidance on street parties will be updated to give a deadline for applications and to encourage early applications in order to manage the workload of staff considering and processing them. Applicants will be required to erect a formal 'road closed' sign, as the Council will not have the resources to provide these due to the potential number involved.