

BYFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held on Thursday 8th July 2021 in Byfield Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm

PRESENT - Cllrs J Gillic (Chairman) Mrs S Boddington, Mrs C Davis and Mrs B Ridyard

Also present – District Cllr Frost

DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS – None

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – were received and accepted from Cllrs Clark, Crowshaw and Shepherd.

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING(S) –

17th June Cllr Ridyard proposed the minutes be adopted as a true record. Seconded by Cllr Boddington and agreed by all who had been present.

2. UPDATE ON MATTERS OUTSTANDING not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a) New lease for Scout HQ, with the Scout Association Trust Corporation. Council solicitor still awaiting return of the lease from the Trust.
- b) Updating Risk Assessment. Still on-going with Chairman.
- c) Updating Financial Regulations. Still on-going with the Clerk.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS None

4. REPORT from Cllr FROST (West Northants Council)

Cllr Frost advised he had attended a virtual meeting regarding the HS2 work in or adjoining the area.

He had received complaints from Clerks to other Parish Councils that the system for advising Parish Councils of decisions on planning applications is not ideal and he asked to be filled in on how this concerned Byfield PC. The Clerk informed him that for some while – almost certainly before March 2020 when the pandemic struck – the previous situation of Clerks being sent details of decisions via email had ceased and they were now required to search the District Council/WNC website to find out if an application had been approved or refused. The explanation as to why the long running and effective system had been brought to a halt was, in the Clerk's view, somewhat vague and rather gave the impression of simply pushing more work onto the Parish Councils. It had to be assumed that applicants were properly advised of the decision on their application and were not just left to find out for themselves via the District Council's website.

Cllr Frost agreed to make investigations and possibly to have the previous system re-instated.

He advised that he and other West Northants Unitary Authority councillors are still to be known as District Councillors.

5. COMMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM PARISHIONERS PRESENT None present

6. GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, requiring a decision and not covered elsewhere on the agenda. None.

7. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM THE LAST MEETING

a) Review of Policies on Archiving and disposal of documents.

- i) Planning - agreed to retain for 5 years. Details should be available via West Northants Council website.
- ii) Finance – agreed to retain for 7 years as required.

b) Name for the road for the new 7 property development on north side of Boddington Road

It was agreed to request this be Queens Close to form a link to Jubilee Close (for King George V) on the opposite side of the road and also to mark HM the Queen's upcoming Platinum Jubilee in 2022. (The alternative name of Brightwell Close would be offered if Queens Close is not acceptable.)

8. FINANCE

a) Financial state The Clerk reported that at 30th June 2021 the Council's total financial assets – all with Lloyds Bank – were £118,430 of which £42,166 is ring-fenced including £6027 belonging to the Brightwell Recreation Ground Charity which is awaiting the opening of a new bank account. Its account with NatWest having been effectively closed by that bank.

Fund balances Information was provided to councillors on expenditure to date. Expenditure to the end of June was £23,680 against the annual budget of £75,050.

b) Internal Control Cllr Gillic reported he and Cllr Davis had collectively inspected the account books and statements and found all to be in order.

c) INCOME banked since the last meeting

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---------|
| Lloyds Bank | Interest for May | £0.88 |
| Byfield CC | Water in pavilion Nov-May | £19.09 |
| Banbury Memorials | Add'l memorial inscription _ G McCoy | £15.00 |
| Byfield Youth FC | Water Nov-May | £19.09 |
| Ditto | Donation re use of BRG in Easter Holidays for commercial sport | £100.00 |
| Byfield Scout Group | Water Nov-May | £4.77 |
| Mr P Lines (cash) | Donation for use of BRG in Spring Half term | £50.00 |
| BRG Charity | Peppercorn rent 2020 and 2021 | £0.10 |
| Byfield Village Hall | ditto | £0.10 |

It was agreed that the £150.00 donations for use of the BRG for young people's sports activities in school holidays be added to the ring-fenced sum held for the Brightwell Recreation Ground charity for when a new bank account can be opened.

d) External audit report Not yet received.

e) ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT See schedule on Page 577

Cllr Boddington proposed the listed accounts be paid plus a few additional accounts which had arrived after the publication of the agenda; seconded by Cllr Ridyard and agreed by all.

9. PLANNING MATTERS

a) WNC APPLICATIONS - Cllr Ridyard reported she had advised neighbours of the meeting of the Council in case any wished to attend.

i) WND/2021/0185 – 14 Greenwood Close to convert 1 dwelling to 2 dwellings including various extensions. Councillors were concerned about a lack of off-road parking provision and the possibility of the highway being used and thus blocking the turning area and making it difficult for large vehicles such as the waste collection lorry and delivery vans. It was agreed to OBJECT due to there being only 1 off-road parking space provided for property 14A.

ii) WND/2021/0206 – 19 Westhorpe Lane to demolish existing conservatory on the rear and construct a single storey rear extension.

It was agreed to SUPPORT the application on the grounds of updating the property and offering improved facilities.

b) DECISIONS None found. 3 applications still outstanding from WNC plus 1 from the former NCC.

c) Lack of information from DDC/WNC on application decisions.

This matter had been raised with Cllr Frost earlier in the meeting.

d) Any urgent matters to be brought to the attention of the Council, received after publication of the agenda. **None.**

10. BPC BURIAL GROUND and CLOSED CHURCHYARD (JG)

a) Burial Ground

i) Dealing with fallen memorial This had been 'sunk' by a recently visiting stonemason but it was felt it might need to be relocated. **JG**

ii) Responsibility for 'making up' collapsed graves The Clerk reported she had advised the widow in question to ask her funeral directors to make up the grave as it was they who had not added enough soil to allow for collapsing. It was agreed it is not the responsibility of the Council to cover the cost of poor workmanship.

b) Closed Churchyard

i) Fallen of unsafe memorials. The Working Party had met with the Churchwardens. It transpires the Parochial Church Council (PCC) would like the Parish Council to assist with the costs of re-setting unsafe memorials. No sum of money yet put forward.

ii) Removal of gates adjacent to recreation ground Some concern was expressed about the PCC's removal of the (unusable) metal gates at the southern end of the churchyard. The Clerk advised that the PCC had sought permission of the Archdeacon who had agreed the gates could be removed as they were not in any regular use and could not be properly closed.

11. LIGHTS and UTILITIES (CD)

a) Known problems with any lights. None. Noted that ivy is growing up the electricity pole which is home to PL10 in Westhorpe Lane. Cllr Davis will ask about cutting through the ivy at ground level. **CD**

b) Consideration of quotations for replacement lights on outside of village hall and rear of Russell Pavilion. These lights are necessary to illuminate Right of Way EF18. Lights with LED bulbs to be provided to reduce costs.

Cllr Davis proposed accepting the quotation from Riviera Electrical. Seconded by Cllr Boddington and agreed by all. **Clk**

12. ALLOTMENT - POCKET PARK - GENERAL ENVIRONMENT (SB with LC)

a) Allotment Gardens

i) Update of a possible problem with rats. Clerk had requested visit from vermin control firm but had heard no more. No update from allotment holders.

Cllr Clark to seek an update when possible. **LC**

b) Pocket Park

i) Report on work by volunteer group. Cllr Boddington reported on the scything of part of Sheep Meadow 2 and general clearing up in the New Wood area.

ii) Damage to Council owned hexagonal seat. A price had been received to reinstate the removed segment and improve the structure overall. Cllr Boddington considered the price to be out of proportion to the value of the bench and proposed the remaining 5 segments be 'tidied up'. She offered to speak with Mr Manton to find out what he, or his father, might be able to do. **SB**

c) General Environment

i) Plant a Tree for the Jubilee (2022) Cllr Boddington reported she is still pursuing this via the primary school. **Sept agenda**

13. COMMUNICATING WITH PARISHIONERS (JG)

a) Update on uses of FB and website. The Chairman advised he is not able to provide statistics.

b) Update on finding a new webmaster. The Chairman advised he is continuing to work on this with former councillor Taylor and a possible volunteer.

14. PLAYGROUND (BR)

a) Weekly inspections. Equipment is acceptable. Unfortunately a lot of litter and dog faeces found from time to time.

b) 'Dogs on Leads' signs All posts and signs have been recovered and are with a local tradesman for re-installation as soon as possible. **Clk/BR**

c) Annual Safety inspection Not yet received. Likely to be undertaken in early/mid-July.

15. RECREATION GROUND

- a) Consideration of quotations to create over-flow pipe to deal with flooding from Cornbrook
Cllr Crowshaw had obtained one quotation. It was agreed it was necessary to seek another quotation. Clerk to contact FJ Morris for a price based on the specification already provided. **CIk**
- b) Additional storage container for use by Tigers Youth FC Following a suggested location from the Football Club it was agreed that the Clerk ask the club to liaise with the Chairman and Cllr Crowshaw to have a site meeting. **CIk**
- c) Request for use of BRG for holiday sports activities It was agreed that Mr Lines could use the field for some commercial holiday sports sessions. The Clerk would advise Mr Lines. **CIk**
Mr Lines would be making a donation to the Recreation Ground charity.
Cllr Ridyard to make a visual check of the field for any likely 'tripping' hazards before sessions commence and to note these. This to satisfy the Council's insurer for general public liability. **BR**

16. HIGHWAYS (SC) Cllr Crowshaw was not able to be present but sent electronic reports to the Chairman during the meeting.

- a) Update on any HS2 matters The newly opened relief road for Chipping Warden had to have the speed limit reduced from 50mph to 30mph following a few 'incidents' on the first day of use. The 'mounting block' which was near to the Aston le Walls cross roads and reported as having been stolen had been removed by a local person who regarded it as belonging to their family.
- b) Improvements to highway verge o/s 12 High Street to deter it being over-run. The Clerk reported that a site meeting with the County Highways liaison officer had not been over useful as it seemed that any effective work could be too costly. A thorough clearing of the gully and surface water drains is necessary as the area floods very quickly. The Clerk will report this again to County Highways. **CIk**
- c) Methods to reduce traffic speed and over taking on A361 between The Twistle and Edwards Close
The Chairman advised this could be a long project and he and Cllr Crowshaw would work towards a submission to Highways and, possibly, HS2 for some funding. One thought is islands similar to those installed in Charwelton. These do seem to have the desired effect of slowing traffic. **JG/SC**
- Additional item** – In response to some enquiries Cllr Crowshaw reported that the Speed Indicator had been installed in Church Street to monitor the speed of traffic coming in along the Farndon Road. Chris Marriott was keeping an eye on the indicator and David Ward had offered to assist with the data recovery and reporting from the indicator and also from SID on Banbury Road.

17. COUNCIL PROPERTY including pavilions and trees (CD)

- a) Separate water supply to the Russell Pavilion Following the Chairman's suggestion that it might be simpler to create a new separate supply to the village hall it was agreed the Clerk meet with John Taylor to see how simple this might be and to find where the 'tee' off the hall supply is to the pavilion and irrigation tank for the bowls green. **CIk**
(Work by Anglian Water to install a separate meter would still be required)
- b) 'No Responsibility' signs for BPC owned parking areas. The Clerk had obtained the wording for a generic sign as supplied by Nordis. The Chairman suggested a small Working Party be established to consider just what wording councillors might wish to see on any signs. He would write to all councillors. **JG**
- c) Further damage to hexagonal seat in the Pocket Park A revised price to re-install the damaged segment had been received but was considered too high for the value of the seat. Cllr Boddington offered to seek another price.
- d) Offer of a bench for the recreation ground, or close by The late Stewart Adams (of Ibuprofen fame and born in New Terrace) had left money in his will for a bench be installed on The Green or near to the recreation ground. His son had written about this bequest.
The Chairman advised he was in the process of writing a paper on the number of benches – memorial or otherwise – and how best to manage them. He had received a request to place another bench in the burial ground. **JG**

18. RIGHTS OF WAY

a) Any known issues with RoWs in the parish None.

b) Parish Path Warden scheme, with County Highways. Acknowledgement received that Ed Condry's nomination had been accepted. The Chairman noted the thanks of the Council to Mr Condry for signing up with the scheme.

c) Seeking 'Permitted Access' status alongside the canal feeder from Boddington Road to EF4. It was agreed that the Clerk pursue an earlier attempt to obtain permission from the Canal and River Trust for such an access as it would provide the opportunity for shorter circular walk from the village using EF4 and then EF3. A stile or kissing gate would need to be installed on the west side of Boddington Road where the canal feeder joins the reservoir. **Clk**

19. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

a) Village Hall No meeting so no report.

b) Combined Charities Cllr Davis reported that 2 applications had been made in the latest 'round'. One to each charity.

There being no further business to conduct the meeting was closed at 9.32pm.

Date of next meeting – 12th August 2021.

Chairman _____

August 2021

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