

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
Held in the Village Hall, Bishopstone
Thursday 10th January 2013 at 8.00 pm.

MINUTES

Present : Parish Councillors : Major JHS Thompson (JHST) Chairman
Mrs L Williams (LHW), Vice Chairman
A Thorne (AJT)
G Brutton (GRB)
N Barter (NTB)
J Lovering (JL)

Parish Clerk: M R Ash (MRA)

Also present: Mrs P Abbott
Cllr Jose Green
PCSO Jenny Moss

1. Apologies for absence

There were none.

2. Declarations of interest

All Councillors declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 9 (Bishopstone Parish Council Budget and Precept for 2013/14), but had submitted written requests for dispensation to allow them to discuss and vote on those matters. Following consideration JHST proposed the following motion:

That the Council resolve that dispensations be granted under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to all Councillors of Bishopstone Parish Council with a disclosable pecuniary interest that they may discuss and vote on Item 9 of the Agenda for the meeting of the Council on 10th January 2013 (Budget and Precept).

The motion was seconded by LHW and agreed.

3. Approve Minutes of the Meeting on 8th November 2012.

AJT proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2012 be approved. This was seconded by GRB. The minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes, including Action Plan.

Action Points completed since the last meeting and on-going are as noted in the list attached to these minutes.

LHW said that no further progress had been made with the idea of an improved footpath to Stoke Farthing to enable children to cycle to school. Discussion with the farmer concerned are continuing. MRA reported that a rural footpath could be used

by bicycles with the agreement of the landowner. Cycling on a footway was only an offence if the footpath adjoined a road or if precluded by local bye-laws.

MRA reported that a letter had been sent to Wiltshire Housing Management about the behaviour of a tenant in Whitlock Rise. A substantive response was yet to be received. It was agreed that a further letter should be sent. [Post Meeting Note: a response has now been received and has been circulated to Members.]

An item had been included in STaB asking that cars not be parked in the bus pull-in opposite Pitts Lane. This had some initial impact, but cars were still being parked there, causing potential danger to bus users and motorists. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to all residents of that stretch of the High Road asking for their co-operation in this matter.

A Youth Project grant application had been made to the SWWAB for support for the Saturday Soccer coaching on the Recreation Field. Thanks to the hard work of Marion Foster and the young people who made the presentation at the SWWAB meeting a grant of £970 had been agreed [see note under Item 8 below].

MRA said that he had circulated to all Councilors a copy of the Wiltshire Council Community Assets Toolkit. This explained what steps could be taken to ensure that the community had an opportunity to bid if assets of value to the community were put up for sale by private landowners. Several Councillors expressed concerns about the long term viability of the White Hart pub and it was agreed to make arrangements to discuss the position with the landlord after his winter break.

5. Public Question Time.

No matters were raised.

6. Report by Cllr Jose Green

Cllr Jose Green said that she was pleased that the Council had submitted a bid for the re-painting of white lines on local roads. This would be considered by the Community Area Transport Group shortly. A number of councils, including Tollard Royal and Bowerchalke had made representations to Wiltshire Council about the need for urgent action to improve broadband speeds in this area. Wiltshire Council is rolling out a programme to provide high speed broadband in the county but there was a danger that priority would go to more urban areas. There might be benefit in parish councils concerting their efforts on this. Cllr Green said that she would forward copies of the representations so far made and a contact list to MRA. Cllr Green noted that Bishopstone Village Hall had submitted an application for grant aid to provide audio/visual equipment for the hall. This was in time to be considered at the February SWWAB meeting, which would be the last meeting to consider grant applications before the election in May. It was unclear what shape the Area Board would take after the election and what resources it would have available. She also mentioned that the Board was considering whether to support a 12 month internship which would enable the post holder to help promote business interests and employment in the SWWAB area. GRB suggested that this should build on existing expertise in the area.

7. Chairman's announcements

JHST said he wished to congratulate the organizers, led by Marion Foster, of the

Bish Bash Christmas Extravaganza. This had been a great success with large numbers of both adults and children attending. AJT reported that discussions were now underway to organise the Party in the Park 2013, which was likely to be held on Saturday 8th June. This would tie in with the week of the jubilee of the Queen's coronation. It was unlikely that financial support would be required from the Parish Council for this event. LHW reminded the Council that it had previously agreed, when discussing the 2012 jubilee arrangements, to consider the provision of a children's memento, such as a mug, for the coronation jubilee in 2013. It was agreed that AJT would discuss with Madeline Gooch who had organized the Millenium Mug.

On a less positive note JHST said he was concerned that the village cricket team seemed to have ceased existence. JL explained that he had found it impossible to attract sufficient players and no matches had been played in 2012. AJT said that there were individuals who might be prepared to try to get something organized at the junior level. This might follow on from the soccer coaching during the summer. It was agreed to put something in a future STaB to see if there was a sufficient level of interest.

8. Parish Clerk's Report

Saturday Soccer

MRA said that the Parish Council had provided virtually all of the funding for the Saturday Soccer Coaching since June 2012. It was because this level of funding could not be sustained that the application for a grant had been made to SWWAB. However, the successful bid (see Item 4 above) had included a commitment from the Parish Council to provide £350 to meet part of the cost in 2013. This grant needed to be formally approved. NRB proposed that this grant be made, this was seconded by LHW and agreed.

Road White Lining

As mentioned by Cllr Green, an application had been submitted to SWWAB/CATG for road white lines to be repainted. The priorities put forward were the bottom of Croucheston Drive, centre lines along the High Road, Church Lane junction with the High Road and Portfield Road junction with the High Road.

YLCS work

MRA reported that the Youth Leisure Credit Scheme had repaired and reconfigured the stile at the Church Lane end of the Picnic Field so that dogs could get through, and repaired the footpath entrance to the meadow opposite the Old School House. Material costs for this work were £26.86. It was usual for the Council to make a contribution to YLCS funds. He considered that a contribution of £50 would be appropriate. GRB proposed that a payment of £76.86 be made. This was seconded by JL and agreed.

Invoices

MRA said he had received invoices totaling £252.00 in respect of Soccer Coaching in November and December and one for £174.00 in respect of hire of the Village Hall during 2012. AJT proposed that these payments be made, seconded by GRB. This was agreed.

Other matters

MRA said that a first meeting of the Bishopstone Community Plan Working Group will take place on 13th February 2013.

An election for all places on the Parish Council will take place on 2nd May 2013. The March meeting of the Council would therefore be the last before the election. MRA said that there were already vacancies on the council and so, even if existing members stood and were elected, there would be a need for some additional new councillors. He would therefore be including an item in STaB about this, inviting expressions of interest in becoming a councillor.

9. Bishopstone Parish Council Budget and Precept for 2013/14

MRA said that he had circulated a paper (BPC/01/13) reporting on expenditure in 2012/13 and setting out proposals for the budget and precept for 2013/14. A copy of that paper is attached to these minutes.

So far as 2012/13 was concerned, considerable expenditure had been undertaken in connection with Saturday Soccer Coaching, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the refurbishment of the bus shelters. Total expenditure for the year was likely to be around £8,700. The precept had been £5000 so it was apparent the extent to which expenditure in 2012/13 had relied on accumulated surpluses from previous years.

As regards 2013/14 and future years, it was clear that it would not be possible to sustain expenditure at the level of 2012/13 without a significant rise in the precept. The precept calculation for 2013/14 was complicated by changes the Government had made to Council Tax Benefit. This was explained in the paper.

Paper BPC/01/13 illustrated that if the precept remained at its current level and expenditure was at the maximum that could be afforded in each year (taking account of the precept and remaining surpluses), by the year 2015/16 all surpluses would have been exhausted and expenditure would be limited to the amount of the precept. This would mean, for example, the end of all discretionary grants to village organizations. It was therefore desirable to begin the process of moderating the level of spending and, perhaps, marginally increasing the precept so as to bring income and expenditure more into line in future years. Whilst the Government had urged authorities to freeze Council Tax demands it had indicated that it would not take action in 2013/14 to trigger referenda under the Localism Act for increases proposed by precepting authorities. Instead it would take behaviour in 2013/14 into account in deciding action in 2014/15.

The paper therefore recommended increasing the precept to £5200 in 2013/14 and the adoption of a budget totaling £7410. That would mean a small increase in the Council Tax to Band D properties of £1.93 a year and slight reductions in the amount of grants made to village organizations (this is the "alternative budget" in Table (iii) of BPC/01/13). It was proposed to maintain the support for STaB at its current level.

MRA put forward a further proposal at the meeting. He said that the Council had previously agreed to make the Clerk's position a paid employment. This was to have begun in May 2012 but no payments had yet been made pending establishment of a PAYE/tax system. The proposed salary of just over £1500 was 32% of the current precept and 40% of that would go directly back to the Government in tax. MRA said

that when he took over as Clerk it was without prospect of payment and he was quite happy to provide the service as Clerk on a pro-bono basis, so long as out of pocket expenses were met. In the light of the budget options, it seemed ludicrous to him that such a large proportion of the Council's resources should be used in this way. If the Council agreed to this change the "alternative" budget could be further reduced by £1300 (leaving £500 to cover expenses) and total £6110.

Following considerable discussion it was proposed to agree the recommendation in the paper, as amended by the proposals put forward at the meeting as regards payments to the Clerk. JHST said that the Council was very appreciative of the all that the Clerk did for the Council, but the points he had made were understood. That part of the proposals was only to be agreed on the understanding that full claims were made for any expenses incurred. AJT proposed that the precept for 2013/14 be set at £5200 and the budget at £6110, this was seconded by NTB and agreed.

10. Amendment to Financial Standing Orders

This item was deferred pending advice from the Council's internal auditor.

11. Payroll Services for Parish Councils

This item was deferred following decisions under Item 9 regarding the Clerk's salary so that further investigations could be carried out to determine what would be needed if no salary was paid.

12. Planning Matters

Consideration was given to a proposed two storey side extension to 5 Faulston Cottages, Faulston Lane (Application No: S/2012/1762) and it was decided that no objection should be raised in response to the consultation from Wiltshire Council. MRA mentioned that there was also an application for Listed Building Consent for internal work to Bishopstone House. No objection was raised to these proposals.

13. Questions or statements from Councillors and any further questions from members of the public.

Councillor Lovering announced that he would be standing down following his move out of the village. The Chairman thanked Councillor Lovering for his contribution to the work of the council. It was noted that the March meeting of the Council will be the last before elections in May. Vacancies created by the resignations during the year of Cllr Draper and Cllr Lovering would be filled then.

Date, location and time of next meeting

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.15pm. The next meeting will be on Thursday 14th March 2013 at 8.30pm in the Village Hall. It will be preceded at 7.30pm by the Annual Parish Meeting.

Signed as an accurate record:

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Chairman

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Date

**BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 8th November 2012**

ACTION PLAN

WHAT ACTION	BY WHOM	COMPLETED ✓
Options for refurbishment of recreation ground toilet block to be identified for consideration. Estimate of likely costs to be obtained.	JHST/AJT/MRA	
Discuss with Highways Dept/Parish Steward and landowner maintenance of land by bridge in Faulstone Lane.	MRA	
Broadchalke Parish Council to be contacted to discuss the possibility of surfacing of the path from Croucheston to Stoke Farthing so that it could be used by school children as a cycle route.	LHW/MRA	
Letter to be written to the relevant Housing Manager about ant-social behaviour in Whitlock Rise.	MRA	✓
Wiltshire Council to be reminded to fill grit bin in Whitlock Rise.	MRA	✓
Further item to be included in STaB re parking in the bus lay-by.	MRA	✓
Users of the Recreation Field to be reminded not to bring cars into the field if the surface is soft and might cut up.	MRA	✓
Application to be made for SWWAB Youth Project grant to fund Saturday morning soccer training in 2013.	MRA	✓
Follow up action to be taken on Playground Safety Report.	AJT	
Bag of gravel to be purchased for re-surfacing footpath to The Croft.	MRA	
Current position on right to acquire community assets to be determined.	MRA	✓
Possible "e-mail alert system" to be proposed in STaB.	MRA	
Letter to be sent to residents about parking in bus pull-in.	MRA	
Provision of coronation jubilee mug to be discussed with Madeline Gooch.	AJT	
Future of pub to be discussed with landlord.	AJT/GRB	
Article on whether to re-establish cricket team to be included in future STaB.	MRA	
Note to encourage candidates for May elections to be included in STaB.	MRA	