

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
Held in the Village Hall, Bishopstone
Thursday 11th July 2013 at 8.00 pm.

MINUTES

Present : Parish Councillors : Major JHS Thompson (JHST) Chairman
G Brutton (GRB)
N Barter (NTB)
A Thorne (AJT)

Parish Clerk: M R Ash (MRA)

Also present: Mr M Bundy
Mr C Goodfellow
Miss V Middleton-Smith
Mrs A Smith
Mr R Stockton
Mrs P Stockton
Mr S Tatner
Mrs D Wass
Mr T Long (agenda items 1 – 3)
Mr C Panes (agenda items 1 – 3)
Mr J Price (agenda items 1 – 3)

Cllr Jose Green (Wiltshire Council)
Ms Victoria StJohn-James (Wiltshire Council for item 3)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr J Gibbon.

2. Declarations of interest

There were none.

3. Rural Housing Needs Surveys

Victoria StJohn-James introduced herself as a member of the housing team at Wiltshire Council responsible for undertaking Rural Housing Needs Surveys. She explained that there was a policy to roll-out these surveys across the county at the invitation of Parish Councils. The aim of the surveys is to investigate the affordable housing needs of local people. Housing need can be defined as the need of an individual or household to obtain housing which is suitable to their circumstances, particularly if the household is unable to afford or to access suitable accommodation in the private sector. The survey took the form of a questionnaire that would be distributed, by the Parish Council, to every household in the village, with a pre-paid return envelope that went back to Wiltshire Council.

The survey is in two main parts – the first section collected general information about

housing in the village and sought views on whether there was a need for more (including market housing). The second part collected specific information from households in need, for example on whether households were sharing accommodation, whether there are young people (ie children of families in the village) who are likely to need accommodation, and on what type of accommodation might be needed (eg market, shared ownership, private rented, social rented etc). She circulated copies of a recent survey conducted in Quidhampton.

There was a short discussion about how affordable housing (whether low cost houses for sale, shared ownership or rented) can be provided. The key mechanism was the land price. Wiltshire had a policy to support affordable developments on “exclusion sites” – those are sites that, whilst being well related to the village, would not normally be approved for development under the other policies in the development plan. This provided an incentive to landowners to bring the land forward at a price above its existing use value but below housing market value. This mechanism was being used increasingly across Wiltshire. MRA said that there was also increasing interest in a new mechanism whereby the development was undertaken by a housing association on land owned by a Community Land Trust. This enabled the village, which controlled the trust, to ensure that any development benefitted local people first.

It was agreed that Councillors would read the Quidhampton report and decide at the next meeting whether to go ahead with the survey.

4. Approval of Minutes of the Meeting on 9th May 2013.

No matters of accuracy were raised in relation to the minutes of the meeting on 9th May 2013. AJT proposed that they be approved, this was seconded by GRB and agreed.

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

A number of items on the Action Plan list remained to be progressed (see AP attached to these minutes). It was agreed to delete the item on provision of a coronation jubilee mug as the moment had now passed.

MRA reported that:

- He had consulted Community First, who arranged the Council’s insurance cover for the children’s playground, on whether it was necessary for a playground safety inspection to be carried out every year. They had advised that one every two years would be adequate, so long as periodic inspections were made by the Council to ensure that all was well. Cllr Thorne does precisely that. Last years inspection had not raised many issues, and those that were raised had been dealt with. If no inspection was undertaken this year there would be a saving of £75. AJT proposed that the next inspection be undertaken in 2014, seconded by JHST and agreed.
- An e-mail had been received from Wiltshire Council saying that maintenance work was to be carried out on the Whitlock Rise car park. Mr Bundy raised concerns as to what this might entail. He thought that merely spreading more gravel would not solve the problem. MRA was asked to contact Wiltshire Council to request a site meeting so that matters could be discussed.
- The request that Wiltshire Council remove the dead tree on land at The Styles had been passed to the relevant officers.
- Anti-dog fouling signs had now been purchased and installed in the path

between The Croft and the Village Hall and on the land by the bridge in Faulston Lane. Mr Tatner suggested that a sign should be erected in the path between Pitts Lane and The Styles.

- A copy of the presentation setting out how the new “Local Highways and Street Scene” contract was supposed to work had been received. It is circulated with these minutes.
- The new local highways co-ordinator had promised to take up the issue of flooding across the road crossing by the White Hart.

6. Public Question Time.

Mrs Smith asked that something be done to trim the branches of the tree to the west of the bus stop by the recreation field. The low hanging branches made it difficult to see when the bus was coming and for the driver to see people waiting. Cllr Thorne undertook to make arrangements for the branches to be trimmed.

7. Report from Cllr Jose Green

Cllr Green said that Wiltshire Council had apologised profusely to everyone about the problems that had been encountered regarding implementation of the new Local Highways and Street Scene contract and the cutting of grass in amenity areas in villages. The second cut was now happening and she hoped that things would now get back to normal. An internal review was underway to determine whether errors had been made in the procurement process.

Whilst the Government had announced some delays in the rural high speed broadband project, the timetable in Wiltshire had not slipped and the Chalke Valley was due to be upgraded in early 2014.

8. Chairman’s Items

JHST said that local people had been angered by the grass cutting fiasco. The contractors were clearly unprepared to take over the contract on 1st June and Wiltshire Council bore responsibility for that. The delay meant that the grass was 4 – 5ft tall by the time it was cut. It was then astonishing to be told that the contract did not include any provision for the cut grass to be collected. The result is that there was now a thick mulch which was killing the grass underneath and encouraging weed growth. Mr Stockton referred to the agreement with the local authority entered into when The Croft was built. This provided for the local authority (to which Wiltshire Council are the successor body) to maintain the grassed area in The Croft “for the benefit of the amenity of the residents”. There was no way that what had been done could be considered as discharging that undertaking. He was also concerned at the way that repeated correspondence, mainly by e-mail, on this subject had simply been ignored. JHST said that the Parish Council was equally concerned about the state of the land in Whitlock Rise and The Styles. Cllr Green said that she would take up the question of removal of the cut grass.

JHST said he wished to record the thanks of the Parish Council to all of those involved, particularly Marion Foster and Cllr Thorne, in putting on the Bishopstone Big Day Out. This had been an outstanding success.

9. Parish Clerk’s Report

MRA said that the Council had previously approved a payment of £55.80 for the ballast materials for the resurfacing of the footpath from The Croft to the Village Hall. This work had now been done by local residents. However, a small amount of additional material had been needed. The cost of this was £33.76. JHST proposed that this additional cost be met, this was seconded by GRB and agreed.

The cost of the anti-dog fouling signs had been £26.16 and he sought reimbursement of this cost. This was proposed by GRB, seconded by AJT and agreed.

MRA said that he had attended a recent meeting of the Community Area Transport Group. The consultant's report on the review of speed limits on the C12 was expected at the end of July. The Parish Council will be consulted on the outcome.

MRA reported that the Financial Annual Report for 2012/13 had been approved by the external auditors. The level of expenditure in the last year was at a level that meant there was no charge for this service. This meant there would be a saving of £150 against the approved budget for 2013/14.

The SWWAB now had its own Speed Indicator Device that would be made available to Parish Councils. However, PCs had to provide a suitable post for mounting the device and had to keep an eye on it while it was in their care. The device, in addition to providing a visible warning to drivers who were exceeding the limit, could provide valuable data on traffic volumes and speeds for future planning purposes. It was agreed to make arrangements to meet those involved to discuss requirements.

A number of those present raised the related issue of speeding on the side roads in Bishopstone, particularly of commercial vehicles travelling down Harvest Lane to the various businesses at Crouchston Farm. MRA said that he was not optimistic that Wiltshire would want to consider extensions of the 30 mph limit as this had been raised a number of times in the past. However, it would be possible to raise it again in the context of the response to consultation on the C12 report.

10. Possible Community Asset Transfer of land in The Styles

MRA said that he had circulated a paper (attached to these minutes) on whether to apply to Wiltshire Council to transfer the "garden extensions" behind The Styles to the ownership and management of the Parish Council. Wiltshire Council had encouraged the transfer of land of this sort in their "Community Ownership of Assets Toolkit" published in 2012. There was evidence of demand in the village for allotments and previous applications had been turned down. There was one plot currently let at a rent of £20 a year. If the Parish Council took over it would receive the income from lettings. There were 4 plots altogether. Cllr Green said that approval of such a transfer might depend on whether Wiltshire Council had any longterm plans for the land. After a short discussion it was decided that the Clerk should make preliminary inquiries of Wiltshire Council as to their willingness to make a transfer before a final decision on whether to go ahead with an application is made.

11. Planning Applications

MRA said that there were no new applications to be considered.

Mrs Wass raised the application (13/00246/FUL) by Lady Cobham for the creation of managed flood plains habitats at Crouchston Farm. She thought that the Parish

Council should have been supporting this proposal.

MRA said that the Parish Council, in its response to the consultation from Wiltshire Council, had recognized that the proposals might have advantages, including reducing the risk of flooding to Mrs Wass's property. However, a number of residents, and the Parish Council, had expressed concern about the possible impact of the proposals on the volume of water and the natural habitats of the main River Ebble. The Parish Council had hoped that the situation would be clarified by the comments submitted by the Environment Agency. Whilst the EA had said they had no objection to the proposals, they had then raised a series of concerns and sought additional information. The EA say that an assessment of environmental impacts of the loss of flow in the main river should be a condition of any approval. The normal course of events in the planning system is for any environmental impacts to be assessed as part of the application process so that they can be taken into account in the decision. The EA also say that there is insufficient information in the submitted application to be able to tell how the "water dynamics" of the new arrangements will work. In the circumstances the Parish Council consider that more information is required before any approval is given.

Cllr Jose Green said that she had asked for the application to be referred to the Southern Planning Committee for consideration if it was proposed to approve it. She said she would ask officers whether they were happy with the advice received from the Environment Agency as a basis for any decision.

Mrs Wass said that the problem was that any water that entered the ditch alongside Rose Cottage from the river had nowhere to go since the previous owner of Crouchston Farm had blocked the ditch. This diverted water onto her property and had caused flooding up to the level of the floor of her outbuildings on previous occasions of heavy river flow. Previous requests to get the flow through the ditch re-established had failed, which was why she supported the current proposals. She said that Lady Cobham intended to drop the proposals for decking included in the application. MRA said that this would require an amended application and that this perhaps provided an opportunity for additional information to be provided which would answer some of the issues raised by the EA and others.

Mrs Wass asked why the Parish Council did not have an emergency plan to deal with any flooding problems (including the availability of sand bags). JHST said that this had been considered but was not thought to be necessary. However, the Parish Council would re-consider at the next meeting.

12. Future co-options to the Parish Council

JHST said that interest had been shown by Chris Goodfellow and Steve Tatner in being co-opted onto the council. However, he was still concerned that, if possible, a lady villager should join the council. In response, Mrs A Smith put her name forward for co-option. The position therefore was that with three volunteers for two places on the council a vote would need to be taken on who to co-opt. Mr Goodfellow and Mr Tatner had been invited to this meeting so that they could confirm their interest. Mr Goodfellow said that he was still interested. Unfortunately Mr Tatner had since left the meeting. MRA was asked to contact Mr Tatner to get confirmation of his continuing interest. Final decisions on co-options would then be taken as the first item of business at the next meeting in September.

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

There were none.

14. Date, location and time of next meeting.

The meeting was closed at 10.15pm. The next meeting is on Thursday 12th September at 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

Signed as an accurate record:

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Chairman

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Date

**BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 11th July 2013**

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	
Possible data protection issue to be considered before an "e-mail alert system" is proposed in STaB.	MRA	
Future of pub to be discussed with landlord.	AJT	
Article on whether to re-establish cricket team to be included in future STaB.	MRA	
Investigate whether a playground safety inspection is required every year.	MRA	✓
Letter to be sent to Wiltshire Council on re-surfacing of car park in Whitlock Rise.	MRA	✓
Seek quote from Jon Kington for bench refurbishment.	MRA	
Wiltshire Council to be asked to remove a tree on land at the corner of The Styles	MRA	✓
Dog fouling "clear up" signs to be purchased.	MRA	✓
Various highway issues to be taken up with Wiltshire Council in the light of new arrangements for Local Highways and Street Scene.	MRA	✓
Wiltshire Council be reminded of the need to do something about drainage at the White Hart road crossing	MRA	✓
Wiltshire Council to be contacted re a site meeting on Whitlock Drive car park.	MRA	
Dog fouling sign to be erected on Pitts Lane path.	MRA	
Branches on tree by bus stop to be trimmed.	AJT	
Meeting to be arranged re the siting of a SID.	MRA	
Wiltshire Council to be contacted re possible CAT of land in The Styles.	MRA	

