

Minutes of Meeting of Bletsoe Parish Council held on Monday 17th November 2014 at the Village Hall, Memorial Lane, Bletsoe**Present:**

Cllrs Ann Gibbons (Chairman), Paul Caves, Matthew Cox, John Economides, Mary Laws and the Clerk.

1. Apologies for absence

Alison Field-Foster and Edward Bean – **it was resolved** to accept the apologies.

2. Declarations of interest

All members (with the exception of John Economides) declared an interest in matters relating to the Waiting for the Sun planning application item however dispensations have been granted to these members who therefore have the right to speak and vote on this item. It was noted that a dispensation had not been granted to John Economides who had only recently joined the parish council (September 2014). However, as the planning application for the Waiting for the Sun had now been heard and an appeal decision taken there was no requirement for a dispensation to be made at present.

3. To approve the minutes of previous meeting held on 29 September 2014

It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising

Goalposts – item still outstanding – P Caves

Trees in churchyard – still awaiting confirmation from Planning Department regarding TPO's

It was resolved to contact Andy Prigmore (Beds BC Highways) to enquire if funding would be available for a speed survey to be carried out on Coplowe Lane and also The Avenue. In addition to remind the borough that the promised rumble strip surfacing and upgrading of existing signs onto large yellow background signs at Bourne End crossroads had not yet been actioned.

Light from car park is shining directly onto Coplowe Lane – Cllr Gibbons offered to visit the company and explain which light needs to be re-directed.

5. Public Open Session

There were no questions from the public.

6 Correspondence

- Central Government consultation regarding Planning and Traveller Sites policy

Members went through the document and compiled their responses to the questions which were as follows:

- 1) Yes,
- 2) More transit sites
- 3a) No
- 3b) Yes
- 4) Yes
- 5) Yes
- 6) Yes

- 7) No comment
- 8) Yes
- 9) Yes
- 10) No comment
- 11) No comment
- 12) No comment to the question posed however, members were concerned that local authorities have limited budgets and are liable to incur significant expense in defending a planning refusal at appeal. This could lead to considerable pressure to grant an unjustified application simply to save money and this needs to be addressed by central government.

(ii) Beds BC Budget consultation - **it was resolved** to make no comment

7 **Planning**

The report was noted and **it was resolved** to make no comments on the revised application for the proposed timber shed

Cllr Gibbons reported that Bedford Borough Council had been informed that Mr Allen had made an application to the High Court of Appeal to overturn the decision made by the Secretary of State regarding the Waiting for the Sun planning appeal. There was no timeframe given regarding this latest appeal but it could continue for many months.

Clerk

8 **To receive an update on the Neighbourhood Development Plan**

A number of meetings had now taken place and a questionnaire was being drawn up for the whole village. The group hope to have the questionnaire distributed to all residents by the end of November and to obtain a 50% response rate. Members of the NDP group will contact residents to assist with the completion of the questionnaires if required.

9 **To note the Clerks report**

Cllr Clifton had asked members if they had any suggestions for equipment that could be funded from his Ward Funding. **It was resolved** to ask for funding for an additional piece of play equipment. The clerk would contact Solutions 4 Playgrounds to arrange a site visit to ensure there was sufficient room for an additional piece of equipment and also to inspect the wooden shelter. The Clerk would contact Cllr Clifton to thank him for his offer and inform him of the council's proposal.

There were no other matters which had not already been included elsewhere on the agenda.

10 **Dog Fouling on the Village Field**

Cllr Gibbons had met with the Borough regarding new signs for the village playing field. Unfortunately the council are not able to use the Borough signage unless Dog Control Orders are adopted for the playing field. If the council were to introduce dog control orders then a public consultation would need to take place and advertised in the local press. The clerk had contacted Milton Ernest, Thurleigh and Riseley to enquire if they had any plans to introduce dog control orders and possibly share the cost of the public notice,

but none had any plans at present to introduce dog control orders. The Clerk was asked to contact Sharnbrook PC. In the meantime **it was resolved** to install 5 additional signs to remind dog owners that dogs must be kept on a lead when using the village playing field and that they should clean up if their dog fouls. The enforcement team at Beds BC have offered to visit Bletsoe to carry out some spot checks but would need to be advised of suitable times of the day. Similarly if members knew the names and addresses of any residents who had been exercising their dogs off the lead on the field or allowed their dogs to foul on public land then the Borough enforcement officers have offered to visit the residents and this information can be given anonymously.

Clerk

11 To adopt the revised standing orders

On 16 August 2014, the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (the 1960 Act) was amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (the 2014 Regulations). The Clerk had been advised by BATPC and the SLCC that these amendments should be adopted with immediate effect. **It was resolved** to adopt the revised standing orders.

Clerk

12 To approve the calendar of meetings for 2015

Members had been provided with a draft calendar of meetings for 2015. **It was resolved** to adopt the calendar of meetings with 3 exceptions:

Clerk

- (i) The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council now moved to Thursday 21st May 2015
- (ii) September meeting moved to Monday 28th September due to village hall already being booked
- (iii) November meeting moved to Monday 30th November due to the village hall already being booked

13 Financial Matters:

(i) To approve the accounts for payment

It was resolved to approve the accounts for payment. In addition two additional invoices were presented, The Poppy Appeal £17 (Civic Wreath) and Maroon Planning £159 (NDP) and **it was resolved** to approve these additional items for payment.

Clerk

Ch No	Payee	£	Description
1301	A Southern	88.60	Working from home allowance, mileage and ¼ cost of toner cartridges
1302	Maroon Planning	250.00	NDP
1303	Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	489.60	Grasscutting
1304	Corinthian Stone	1008.00	War memorial restoration and cleaning
1305	Bletsoe Village Hall Fund	10.00	Hall hire for PC meeting
1306	Maroon Planning	159.00	NDP
1307	The Poppy Appeal	17.00	Civic Wreath
	TOTAL	2022.20	

14 **Village hall – request to support grant application for refurbishment works to the hall**

The village hall committee are looking to apply for funding to upgrade the hall facilities including a new kitchen and toilets. In order for the committee to apply for the level of funding required for the project it would be necessary to ask the parish council to support the application and also to make a contribution of approximately £5.5K towards the repairs by acting as a third party. The clerk advised that there would be sufficient undesignated reserves this financial year to meet this request. However, the council should not be expected to process the whole amount of the grant through its accounts should the application be successful as the village hall has its own bank account and is managed separately to the parish council. The clerk also advised that Bedford Borough Council operate a Rural Grants scheme which offered grants to organisations for projects such as the village hall refurbishment. Members were keen to support the application (the village hall is owned by the parish council) and **it was resolved** to act as a third party which could incur a cost to the council of approx £5.5K.

16 Parking on Memorial Lane on the corner adjacent to the triangle by the war memorial – **it was resolved** to write to the housing association to ask if a parking bay could be created using part of the front garden of its property no 1 Memorial Lane.

Clerk

Buses speeding on Coplowe Lane - **it was resolved** to ask Alison Foster to contact Grant Palmer to discuss

A Field-Foster

Hedgerow at far end of playing field required cutting – it was suggested that this could be a task for the BARCing group and Cllr Gibbons would ask the group if they could incorporate this into their schedule.

A Gibbons

An email had been sent to the Chairman received regarding land at Long Haydons. Currently there are four amenity plots and in the past these have housed a caravan on each plot and residency for part of the year. However, the number of caravans has increased and there are now two large mobile homes, two caravans and a large portacabin which have all been granted retrospective planning permissions. In addition there are three cars and two boats on the land. Most recently the owners tried unsuccessfully to get another mobile home down the drive but the hedge prevented them from doing so. There is a potential that this land will simply become a permanent site and more retrospective applications made and granted. Would the parish council write to the Borough to inform them of the current situation? **It was resolved** to write to the planning enforcement team to inform them of the latest situation and ask them to carry out a site visit and report back to the council their findings.

Clerk

17 Date of next meeting - Monday 19th January 2015

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Approved by Chairman 19th January 2015