

Minutes of Meeting of Bletsoe Parish Council held on Thursday 29th May 2014 at the Village Hall, Memorial Lane, Bletsoe

Present:

Cllrs Ann Gibbons (Chairman), Edward Bean, Paul Caves, Alison Field-Foster, Mary Laws, the Clerk and 1 member of the public.

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Bean proposed Cllr Gibbons for the position. **It was resolved** to re-elect Cllr Ann Gibbons to the position of Chairman.

2. Declaration of acceptance of office

The acceptance of office was signed by Cllr Gibbons and witnessed by the Clerk

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Gibbons proposed Cllr Caves for this position. **It was resolved** to re-elect Cllr Paul Caves for the position of Vice-Chairman.

4. Apologies for Absence

Matt Cox – **is was resolved** to accept the apologies for absence.

5. Declarations of interest

All members declared an interest in matters relating to the Waiting for the Sun planning application item however dispensations have been granted to all members who therefore have the right to speak and vote on this item.

Cllr Bean & Cllr Gibbons also declared an interest relating to item 14 (vii) request for funding from St Mary's Church.

Cllr Field-Foster declared an interest in item 12 Planning report in relation to the application from Growing Beds.

6. To approve the minutes of previous meeting held on 17th March 2014

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

7. Matters Arising

Light on Bourne End (opposite no 8 Bourne End Lane) – the Clerk had informed EoN regarding this lamp but although EoN had attended the site this had not been fixed. It was agreed that this lamp is actually the responsibility of Bedford Borough Highways and the Clerk would inform them of the fault.

Clerk

Floodlights from nearby car park – at the moment this did not appear to be a problem but this would be monitored and if necessary a site visit would be arranged.

PCaves

M Laws

8. Public Open Session

There were no questions from the public.

9	<p>To allocate areas of responsibility within the Parish Council It was resolved that all members would continue with last year's responsibilities which were: T&PC Network – Cllr Gibbons and Cllr Bean Play Area – Cllr Caves Street Furniture – Cllr Bean Notice boards – Cllr Gibbons Highways – Cllr Caves Village Hall representative – Cllr Gibbons Chair of Planning committee – Cllr Laws Finance – Cllr Field-Foster</p>	All
10	<p>To nominate a new trustee for the Town Close Charity It was resolved to approve the appointment of Jean Jeavons for a period of 3 years. In addition it was resolved to re-appoint Joyce Crocker for a further period of 2 years. The clerk would write to both residents to inform them of the council's decision.</p>	Clerk
11	<p>To note the Yearly Play Area inspection and approve any works Prior to the meeting the report had been circulated to all members. The clerk highlighted the areas for concern and it was resolved to approve the necessary works. In addition Cllr Caves proposed that the swing seats and chains were replaced and it was resolved that the Clerk would liaise with Cllr Caves and order the replacement parts.</p>	P Caves Clerk
12	<p>Planning The application from Growing Beds was considered. A letter had been drafted which supported the objections raised by Thurleigh Parish Council and included some additional information. It was resolved to approve the draft letter which objected to the application. Cllr Field-Foster abstained from this item having already declared an interest in this item.</p>	Clerk
13	<p>Gypsy & Traveller site appeal - it was resolved that once a decision had been reached a flyer would be produced and distributed to all residents. Cllr Gibbons would liaise with Lance Feaver regarding the wording.</p> <p>To receive an update regarding the Bletsoe Neighbourhood Development Plan The group had met last month together with two consultants from Shaping Communities The group had drafted some questions for the residents' questionnaire and were hoping to receive guidance regarding this. However, the group were very disappointed with the lack of advice given at this meeting. Members felt that they were not given sufficient information/advice to enable them to progress with the questionnaire and that the consultants were proposing to produce the majority of the work which would be charged to Bletsoe NDP. This in effect would use all the funds given by the Locality grant. Bletsoe NDP have not signed any terms of agreement with Shaping Communities and did not wish to continue to work with the consultants. The Clerk informed the meeting that alternative consultants were available and offered to obtain further information. It was resolved that the Bletsoe NDP group would write to Shaping Communities to inform them of their decision and the Clerk would provide details of alternative consultants. It was noted that the funds needed to be spent by</p>	A Gibbons
		P Laws Clerk

the end of 2014 and that there was a strict timetable for when each element of the plan needs to be completed. **It was resolved** to approve the one invoice for payment from Shaping Communities for the last NDP meeting.

14 **(i) To approve the insurance renewal with Aviva and consider entering a 3 year LTA (Long Term Agreement)**

It was resolved to renew with Aviva and to sign the 3 year LTA

(ii) To approve the accounts for payment

It was resolved to approve the accounts for payment which now included an amount for Aviva for the insurance premium and also the Annual Play Inspection.

Ch No	Payee	£	Description
1266	Bletsoe Village Hall Fund	10.00	Hall hire
1267	G Wiggs	85.00	Internal Audit Fee
1268	BATPC	86.00	Affiliation Fee
1269	Shaping Communities Ltd	205.25	NDP consultants fee
1270	Bedford Borough Council	135.96	Grass cutting (field)
1271	Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	403.20	Grass cutting (village)
1272	A Southern	37.00	Working from home allowance
1273	Broker Network Ltd	709.59	Ann Insurance premium
1274	Play Safety Limited	156.00	Annual Inspection fee
	TOTAL	1828.00	

To note the annual spend against budget

Spend against budget – the report was noted.

(iv) To approve Section 1 of the Annual Return for 2013-14

It was resolved to approve the accounts and section 1

(v) To approve the Statement of Governance for 2013-14

It was resolved to approve the statement of governance

(vi) To note the Internal Auditors report

The report was noted. Members discussed the possibility of moving to electronic payments however the current bank account does not allow for electronic payments to be made. The Clerk confirmed that she was happy to continue with the existing banking arrangements and arranging for payments to be made by cheque at each parish council meeting.

(vii) To consider a request for funding from St Mary's Church Bletsoe for repairs to the churchyard wall

The Clerk advised that members could use S137 to make a contribution towards this expense. The maximum the parish council could spend was £1360 as S137 funding had already been allocated for the War Memorial plants, Civic Wreath and contribution towards fireworks for the village display. Cllr Laws proposed that the maximum contribution was given to the Church provided the parish council had sufficient funds to allow this.

The clerk confirmed that the current bank balances included undesignated reserves which could be used to fund this item. **It was resolved** to contribute £1360 to Bletsoe PCC and this would be included in tonight’s accounts for approval.

Cllr Bean and Cllr Gibbons abstained from voting on this item.

15 **To note the Clerks report**

There were no further items not included elsewhere on the agenda.

16 **Parish concerns**

Cllr Bean reported that he was pleased the new bus timetable was now operational. The new times meant the service could be used by commuters to Bedford and school children. Unfortunately this change to the timetable was only in operation during school time. Cllr Bean also reported that he would continue to press for the bus route to be diverted along Kimbolton Road and Brickhill Drive which would encourage more people to use the service and therefore safeguard the route in the future.

Cllr Foster reported that a local bus is operated by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) but that sufficient numbers of people were needed in order for a bus to be booked.

Members commented on the need for more passing places on Coplowe Lane this was discussed in detail and **it was resolved** that the existing passing places should be clearly signposted so that motorists knew where the official passing places making it less likely/necessary to mount the verges.

E Bean

Cllr Bean offered to investigate how the parish could designate Coplowe Lane as a “quiet lane” which would then mean a reduction in speed to 20mph. Members reported that some of the buses were speeding and there was concern about pedestrian safety. **It was resolved** to write to Grant Palmer to request they remind their drivers to refrain speeding as the lane is regularly used by dog walkers and pedestrians.

E Bean

Signage Coplowe Lane – Cllr Bean reported that the Borough will be removing the superfluous signage within the next couple of month.

Old Way sign – needs replacing

Memorial Garden – there was concern that a precedent could be set by an organisation taking it upon themselves to convert the memorial garden to a nature area and that other organisations or individuals could begin changing areas of the village without consultation with the Parish Council. Cllr Gibbons reported that the volunteer group (Bletsoe Active Recreational Club) have recently undertaken a range of jobs tidying up the parish. The group meet at 10am on Thursday mornings. The group are seeking permission from the parish council to undertake some planting in the Memorial Garden including a small fruit tree (possibly a cherry). The group held an activity during the half time for local children and it has been suggested that the old bus shelter within the memorial garden is converted

Clerk

into a bird hide. The children would then be able to view the wildlife/birds and learn more about the different birds & flowers as there would be posters displayed within the shelter to help them identify the different species. **It was resolved** to give permission for the group to undertake planting within the Memorial Garden and also to convert the shelter and that any works undertaken in the memorial garden from any group/individual would firstly require the permission of the Parish Council.

A Gibbons

Tree on Memorial Lane opposite no 9 – there is concern that the tree has become too large for its location and requires reducing as if the tree were to fall down it would go straight onto the property at no 9 Memorial Lane.

Dog Fouling on Playing Field - it was reported that residents had been exercising their dogs off the lead on the playing field and that dog fouling is now becoming a bigger problem. Members discussed that if residents did not obey the rules regarding use of the playing field it might mean a total ban on dogs being exercised on the field in the future. A note would be included in the forthcoming Parish Council Newsletter which will be distributed to all households reminding them of the conditions of the use of the playing field and advising them that the council will consider an order to ban dogs from being taken onto the field.

Date of Next Meeting – Date of next meeting Monday 21st July

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Approved by Chairman 21st July 2014