

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

Present:

Cllr Barbara Bailey (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr John Bailey (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Ken Coles (Braysdown Allotments Committee),
Cllr Jo Davis (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Audrey Gillard-Sprake (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Michael Gregory (Peasedown St John Cricket Club),
Mr Adam James (Assistant Scout Leader - 1st Peasedown St John Scout Group),
3Mr William Jones (Braysdown Allotments Committee),
Cllr Simon Kidd (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Karl Kilburn (Group Scout Leader - 1st Peasedown St John Scout Group),
Cllr Andy Larcombe (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Ms Claire Loder (Blooming Whiteway, Bath),
Cllr Ray Love (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
PCSO Tony McIntosh (Avon & Somerset Police),
Mr Paul Pearce (Parks and Green Spaces Team - Bath & NE Somerset Council),
Cllr Jonathan Rich (Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Les Sprake (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Kathy Thomas (Vice-Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council).

Parish Council Staff: Deborah Parish, Tanya West.

A total of 26 people attended the meeting.

1) Welcome

The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed those present, including members of the Parish Council, other invited guests and speakers and the village residents present at the meeting.

2) Apologies for absence had been received from:

Cllr Gill Auld (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Dianne Bird (Chair, Peasedown Social & Wellbeing Group), Cllr Mandy Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Cllr Richard Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Caroline Haworth (Director - Bath Area Play Project), Cllr Gavin Heathcote (Peasedown St John Parish Council), PCSO Louise Jones (Avon & Somerset Police), Ashia Kusawake (Bath Allstarz Cheerleaders), Phil Lyle and the leadership team (Peasedown St John Primary School), Cllr Conor Ogilvie-Davidson (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Linda Parker (President - Peasedown St John WI), Jill Souter (The Hive Community Centre & Braysdown Allotments), Sarah Williams (Chief Executive Officer - SWAN Transport – Part of Swan Advice Network).

3) Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 29th March 2022

Minutes of the previous Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 29th March 2022 had been circulated in advance. It was **agreed** that these were a true and correct record of the meeting.

4) Report from the Headteacher of Peasedown St John Primary School

Unfortunately, due to a clash with parents evening, it was not possible for a representative from the Primary School to attend.

5) Report from a representative of the Avon & Somerset Constabulary – P.C.S.O. Tony McIntosh.

- Crime statistics show that local crime rates (for Peasedown St John and Paulton) are mostly down on the preceding year apart from burglaries (the majority of which have been from sheds and garages) and violence against person.

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

- There has been an increase in anti-social behaviour. If any local residents are victims of anti-social behaviour, please report it so that it can be followed-up by the Police.
- Additional volunteers were needed for neighbourhood speed watch, particularly in Ashgrove/Bath Road.

6) Report from the Parks and Green Spaces Team from B&NES Council about the rewilding of verges in Peasedown St John – Paul Pearce (Team Leader Parks Projects, B&NES Council) and Claire Loder (Blooming Whiteway)

- Funding has been secured from WECA (West of England Combined Authority) to improve pollinator habitats in the area by introducing wildflower meadows in areas where there was previously mown grass.
- Eight sites have been identified across the district, one of which is Orchard Way. Orchard Way immediately feels like a “green corridor” running through the village. It has wide verges which could be used to encourage wildlife to spread out from areas where it is already present, such as the junction with Eckweek Lane. Options being considered are seeding meadows, bulb displays, bug hotels, bird boxes, log piles and tree planting. B&NES would be running a workshop on the rewilding project later in May/June with Avon Wildlife Trust. It was hoped that some local residents may be able to attend to share their ideas.
- Claire Loder introduced the community project she has been working on, Blooming Whiteway, which aimed to improve wildlife habitats in the Whiteway area of Bath, by encouraging local residents to take part in a driveway festival. Whiteway is located near Bath City Farm and next to open countryside where there is a lot of wildlife nearby and she has been working with other organisations and local gardeners to try to improve the situation further.

7) Annual Peppercorn Ceremony for the rent of the Beacon Hall and Field

The Chair explained that the Parish Council had been granted a 50-year tenancy for Beacon Hall and Field from B&NES Council, for which the rent was one peppercorn per annum. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to get a representative from B&NES Council to receive the “peppercorn rent” for the Beacon Hall and Field this year, but any arrears would be paid the following year.

8) Report from Peasedown St. John Parish Council Chair and Chairs of Standing Committees

a. Cemetery Committee – Cllr. Audrey Gillard-Sprake

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2022, the Cemetery Committee has met three times. This equates to 30 hours of councillor time spent at these meetings plus any time spent on site visits, meeting with residents regarding memorials, opening and closing of the cemetery during staff annual leave and any meeting preparation or follow-up time.

Cllr Audrey Gillard-Sprake, Chair of the Cemetery Committee, gave a review of the Committee’s activities during the year. These included:

- Further improvements have been made to the scattering area this year. Staff and volunteers have planted with bulbs and some perennial plants. Further planting will take place this year.
- The flax plants became too large and dominant for the memorial garden and so some of them have been removed to open out the garden and let the smaller plants grow.
- Clearing the weeds, particularly the bind weed from the tree nursery at the cemetery has been a constant struggle. Councillors have helped to keep on top of it to stop the saplings from being strangled.
- The burial records are continuing to be transferred to digital records which are gradually becoming available on the Parish Council website.
- The cemetery gates were in a bad condition. They have recently been removed to be repaired, sand blasted, galvanised and repainted. They are due to be reinstated early April.

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

b. Finance & Amenities Committee including a statement on the un-audited Parish Council accounts for year ending 31 March 2023 – Cllr. Andy Larcombe

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2022, the F&A Committee has met four times. This equates to 45 hours of councillor time spent at these meetings. Plus, 3x Advisory Panel meetings, bank reconciliations, auditor visits, any preparation or follow-up time. This equates to well in excess of 100 hours of councillor time.

Cllr Andy Larcombe, Chair of the Finance & Amenities Committee, gave a review of the Committee's activities during the year. These included:

Braysdown Allotments:

- During the past year we have carried out quarterly allotment inspections, provided a grant for the annual Allotments Barbecue and re-allocated a total of 11 plots in early 2023, so that the waiting list for those within the parish is now quite short.

Beacon Hall:

- Childrens parties, events, meetings and weddings have been booked in for most weekends. We have more or less returned to normal with our regular and our ad-hoc hirers. We have taken 71 ad-hoc weekend bookings this year and still have space for regular hirers on Fridays.
- Hirers can now clearly see all the available crockery with our new shelving.
- Tables in the lounge now have lockable castors.
- A new boiler has been installed in the Parish Office for more efficient heating and water.
- Outside Beacon Hall bike racks have been installed at the front of the hall together with an outside tap to help with watering the Jubilee Garden.

Beacon Field:

- Repairs to the play equipment and play surface have been carried out.

Recreation Ground - Canteen:

- In early 2022, councillors decided to install a container at the Recreation Ground to provide a canteen, and space for smaller meetings, together with a separate accessible toilet.
- After construction of a concrete base, the container and toilet units were delivered to the Rec and the plumbing and electrical installations were completed.
- Peasedown Miners Welfare Football Club will be regular hirers of the canteen and will now be able to provide refreshments for their spectators and players on match days.
- We hope the new canteen will be of benefit to many local residents. Although the Football Club will have priority on home match days, the canteen is available for local groups to use as an alternative venue for smaller meetings or social events.

Recreation Ground - Play Area Fence:

- The wooden play area fence had started to rot and deteriorate. This year it has been replaced with a bow top galvanised fence that will last longer and require very little maintenance.

Recreation Ground – Football Teams:

- This year two teams call the Recreation Ground Home; Peasedown Miners who play on Saturdays and Team Nathan United who play on Sundays.

Bins:

- Repairs, checking, regular emptying of all our waste bins and grit bins.

Floral Displays:

- We had some fabulous floral displays for Summer/Autumn 2022, adapted for both the Jubilee and Remembrance Day and would like to say a big thank you to all our amazing planting volunteers.

Defibrillators:

- Defibrillators at Beacon Hall and at the Co-op have been used several times this year, demonstrating that they are a very worthwhile resource for village residents.
- They are regularly checked, and their status logged on the national database.

Tree works:

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

- Following tree surveys, we have had to undertake the felling of several ash trees on Parish Council land due to the severity of ash die back. This will continue to be monitored and works will be ongoing.

Christmas Tea Party:

- The annual senior residents Christmas Tea Party made a welcome return, with a singalong led by parish councillors together with bingo, quizzes, and plenty of food. Thank you to all the helpers and donators that made this possible.

New Parish Council Vehicle:

- Following the departure of our long-standing Caretaker, a new vehicle needed to be sourced. Councillors considered all the options, diesel vs. Electric, open vs. closed-in, together with availability. Ultimately, a “clean” diesel 4WD pick-up truck was purchased, which has been marked-up with Parish Council branding.

Community Grants:

- As in previous years the council awarded grants to organisations of benefit to the residents of Peasedown St John. They will make their presentations later in the evening.

Un-audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2023:

Cllr Andrew Larcombe gave a brief statement on the un-audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The finalised accounts will be available to view in the Parish Office after the Full Council meeting on 23rd May 2023, in accordance with the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors’ rights.

c. Personnel Committee – Cllr. Simon Kidd

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2022, the Personnel Committee has met three times (one of the meetings had to be deferred due to the national mourning for the late Queen). This equates to 25 hours of councillor time spent at these meetings, plus any Advisory Panel meetings, weekly meetings with the Clerk, any preparation or follow-up time. Bringing the total number of councillor hours closer to 100.

Cllr Simon Kidd, Chair of the Personnel Committee, gave a review of the committee’s work throughout the year, including:

- We continue to use Work Nest/Ellis Whittam to provide support and advice on Health & Safety and Employment Law. We are due to have an H&S audit with them later this year.
- A Community Engagement Policy was recently adopted which details all the ways in which the Parish Council interacts with residents, community organisations etc.
- Councillor surgeries continue to be held every month, generally on a Friday afternoon/early evening although other time slots are being trialed. Appointment slots can be booked, and the surgeries are held face to face or online. Open days are advertised online and with banners. Only a handful of bookings were made this year, but access and opportunity is provided for residents.
- Some of the training courses completed this year included:
 - ❖ Emergency First Aid at Work
 - ❖ Chapter 8 – Signing, Lighting & Guarding
 - ❖ Parish Online mapping
 - ❖ Delegation skills
 - ❖ Bid writing skills
 - ❖ Project management skills
 - ❖ Food Hygiene and Safety
- Our long-serving Caretaker left at the end of November, along with his vehicle. Since then, we have been covering his duties between the remaining Caretakers and some contractors. We now have a new vehicle which is being put to good use and makes certain jobs much more efficient as it reduces

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

the number of trips required and we have towing capabilities. We are currently advertising for a new Caretaker and reviewing the roles and duties.

d. **Planning Committee – Cllr. Kathy Thomas**

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2022, the Planning Committee has met ten times. This equates to 131.5 hours of councillor time spent at these meetings – plus any preparation time, or follow-up time.

Cllr Kathy Thomas, Chair of the Planning Committee, gave a review of the committee's work throughout the year, including:

Planning Applications:

- We have considered 24 planning applications during this period.
- Councillors often visit the sites to help identify any potential implications and plans are reviewed and feedback from residents taken into consideration.
- The Planning Applications and Decisions report has been streamlined and made easier to read.
- This year we have used the Parish Council Facebook page to:
 - ❖ Advise residents of planning applications being considered at meetings.
 - ❖ Temporary highway closures in the parish.

Planning Policy:

- Central Government determines the number of new houses required for the next 20 years.
- WECA work with the unitary authorities based on the plans from Central Government to establish an overall plan for housing, infrastructure, and employment for the whole West of England area.
- B&NES Council (working with Bristol, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset unitary councils) must base their plans on the Government quotas and the plans from WECA.
- Parish Councils feed into this process to help identify development areas.
- July 2022 – Consultation on B&NES Council's Local Plan Draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document and the Draft Sustainable Construction Checklist Supplementary Planning Document (now adopted).
- Feb 2023 – Workshop in preparation for the new B&NES Council Local Plan to establish the planning framework for the Bath & North East Somerset up to 2042.
- May 2023 onwards – There will be a call for sites and review of proposals.

Electric Vehicle Charging:

- This is now included in the Terms of Reference and Delegations of the Planning Committee.
- The Parish Council is working with B&NES Council on government grant-funded charging points being installed at Beacon Hall car park.

Highways Review:

- Oct 2022 - Meeting with Stefan Chiffers (Area Traffic Engineer for B&NES Council)
- Nov 2022 - Discussed process at Planning Committee
- Mar 2023 - Published article in Parish Council newsletter
- Mar 2023 onwards - Collate feedback from residents, review feedback and present options to Stefan Chiffers at a site meeting.

Consultation from WECA on bus services:

- Aug 2022 - Hosted 'Big Choices' drop in event for residents to provide feedback and raise any known issues
- Sept 2022 - Collated feedback from residents
- Oct 2022 – Agreed responses and submitted.

Cllr Kathy Thomas, Chair of various **Project Work Advisory Panels**, gave a review of their work throughout the year, including:

Project to lay a tarmac path around the entire site of Miners Welfare Recreation Ground:

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

- In 2021, the Parish Council decided to install tarmac paths around the Recreation Ground to make it more accessible to all the residents to walk, run, push a buggy or ride on a mobility scooter around the field on a good surface, at any time of year, making the Recreation Ground accessible and inclusive for all residents. This is in addition to the Equality Act gates which had previously been installed.
- The work was completed in 2022 and earlier in 2023, some initial problems caused by the unusually hot weather when the tarmac was laid, were resolved by the contractor free of charge.
- We've had lots of positive comments!

Persimmon Land Transfer:

- Maps and Land Registry Titles and Plans were investigated and reviewed. A final plan for adoption has been reached.
- Tree works have been undertaken by Persimmon in preparation for the transfer.

Parish Map and Signage Project:

- This time last year the interpretation boards were being drafted. The board design is now established.
- A drop-in session was held in February 2023 as an information gathering exercise, but more photos are needed.

e. Full Council/General – Cllr. Jonathan Rich

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2022, the Full Council has met eight times. This equates to 218 hours of councillor time spent at these meetings. Plus, any pre-reading preparation or follow-up time. Some of the events/activities the Council has been involved with since the last Annual Village Meeting included:

- Installation of the "Jubilee Garden" in the space next to Beacon Hall. After a formal tendering process, a contractor was appointed and works began in early 2022. There was a tight schedule, and the project was completed ready for an opening event on the day of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The opening event and Jubilee Tea was very well attended, and we are grateful to all the volunteers who helped with the project, including the Mini Police and Women's Institute.
- In September 2022, only a few months later, we learned of the passing of her late majesty the Queen. Arrangements were made for residents to pay their respects, including a Book of Condolence. Councillors also met to read the proclamation of the ascension of King Charles III.
- In November 2022 we held the Dressing of War Graves ceremony in conjunction with the British Legion and a Remembrance Event at Beacon Hall.
- In March 2023 we raised a flag for Commonwealth Day in conjunction with children and staff from Peasedown St John Primary School, including the Mini Police.
- This year there were some installation issues with the Christmas motif lights throughout the village, which proved very costly. It has therefore been agreed not to hire these lights again for Christmas 2023. Instead we will be looking at more creative and cost effective options.

[The meeting was paused for a 15-minute refreshment break.]

9) Questions for the Chair

- There were no questions for the Chair, but a local resident offered thanks to the Parish Council for all that they do to keep the village clean and tidy.

10) Presentations were received from the following organisations providing feedback on how their 2022/23 Community Grant awards were spent [the slides from which are attached as an appendix to these minutes]. Unfortunately, some organisations were unable to attend, but had submitted feedback.

- a. Bath Allstarz – Transport to Cheerleading Competition

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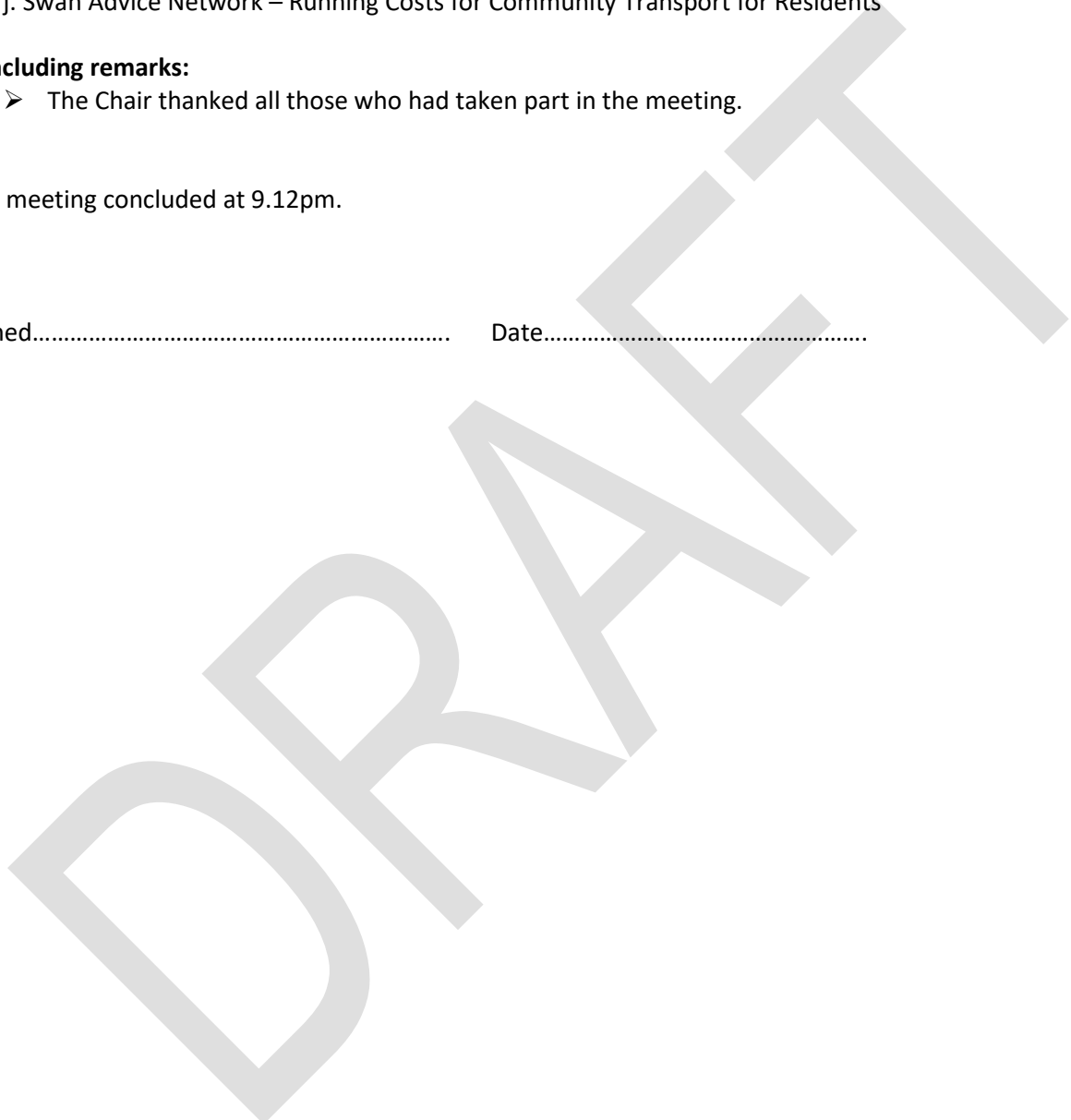
- b. Braysdown Allotments Committee – Allotments BBQ
- c. Bath Area Play Project – Summer Holiday Fun Day
- d. Mini Police – Coach trip to Dog and Horse Police Unit
- e. Peasedown Cricket Club – Fireworks Display
- f. Peasedown Social & Wellbeing Group – Creative courses & craft supplies
- g. Peasedown St John Residents’ Association – Games and equipment for events
- h. Peasedown St John Scout Group – Shelving for garage and camping & flag carrying equipment
- i. Peasedown St John WI – Pop up banners for events
- j. Swan Advice Network – Running Costs for Community Transport for Residents

Concluding remarks:

- The Chair thanked all those who had taken part in the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.12pm.

Signed..... Date.....



**Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 28th March 2023 at 7pm
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Appendix – Presentation slides from organisations providing feedback on how their 2022/23 Community Grant awards were spent

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