

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 19th April 2016 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

DRAFT

Present:

Mrs Barbara Bailey,
Mr John Bailey,
Mr Aubrey Chegwyn,
Mrs Kate Chegwyn,
Mr Percy Clark (Peasedown Athletic Football Club),
Cllr Rod Bridges (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Amanda Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Richard Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Tom Clifford (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Andrew Fraser (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Ian Gilchrist (Chairman, Bath & N E Somerset Council),
Mr Mike Illott,
Mrs Viv Illott,
Rev Michelle Ireland (Peasedown St John Methodist Church),
Cllr Simon Kidd (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Andy Larcombe (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Lesley Mansell (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
PCSO Tony McIntosh (Avon and Somerset Police),
Cllr Jordan Ness (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Claire Parfitt (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Kathy Thomas (Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr David Walker (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Karen Walker (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Ms Alison Wells (Community Projects Officer, Bath & N E Somerset Council),
Cllr Alderman John Whittock (Radstock Town Council),
Cllr Jackie Withers (Chair, Shoscombe Parish Council),
Keith Weller (The Ramblers – Avon Branch)
Mrs Pam Wright (Beacon Hall Lunch Club – together with additional helpers Vera Cowley, Ann Onslow & Marion Millard)

Parish Council Staff: Tracey Edge, James Murtagh, Deborah Parish and Tanya West

Plus, approximately 40 members of the public.

1. Welcome

The Chair of the Parish Council welcomed those present, including Cllr Ian Gilchrist (Chair of Bath & N E Somerset Council), Cllr Les Wild (Chair of Paulton Parish Council), Cllr Martin Robinson (Chair of Dunkerton & Tunley Parish Council), Cllr Jackie Withers (Chair of Shoscombe Parish Council), Revd. Michelle Ireland (Peasedown St John Methodist Church), together with members of the Parish Council, other invited guests and speakers and the village residents present at the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from: PC Matthew Bendall (Avon & Somerset Police), Cllr Sarah Bevan (B&NES Ward Councillor), Mr Calvin Bird, Mr George Clack (Sirona Healthcare), Cllr Jo Davis, Mr David Dixon (B&NES Council Stronger Communities Manager), Cllr Stephen Goodwin, Dorothy House, PCSO Louise Jones (Avon & Somerset Police), Hon. Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, Mrs Gabrielle Stanley (Zumba, Beacon Hall).

3. Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 21st April 2015

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Minutes of the previous Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 21st April 2015 had been circulated in advance. They had previously been agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting at the Full Council meeting of 19th May 2015 (minute C005 – 19/05/2015 refers); this decision was ratified at the Annual Village Meeting accordingly.

4. Report from Peasedown St. John Parish Council including a statement on the un-audited Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016

The Chair summarised some of the work carried out by the Parish Council in the preceding year, as follows:

Role of the Parish Council

The Parish Council is an elected body and is the first tier of local government. Unlike our 2 ward councillors the 17 PSJ parish councillors do not receive any payments, we are volunteers who give our time for the benefit of the community and the majority of us are not associated to any political party.

Parish Councillors and staff

15 Parish Councillors were elected unopposed in May 2015. These were:

Sarah Bevan, Mandy Clarke, Richard Clarke, Tom Clifford, Jo Davis, Andrew Fraser, Stephen Goodwin, Andrew Larcombe, Lesley Mansell, Jordan Ness, Claire Parfitt, Jonathan Rich, Kathy Thomas, David Walker and Karen Walker. Councillors Rod Bridges and Simon Kidd were co-opted in June 2015.

The Parish Council employs five permanent members of staff: Chris Champion (Caretaker), Tracey Edge (Admin Officer), Jim Murtagh (Caretaker), Debbie Parish (Admin Officer) and Tanya West (Parish Clerk), with the addition of casual labour, when required.

The Chair went on to thank all of the following who work for the benefit of the village:

- Volunteers, who help the Parish Council by providing assistance with many tasks, such as planting, running the allotments, snow clearance, checking up on Beacon Hall when the parish office is closed and delivering Newsletters;
- Ward Councillors Sarah Bevan and Karen Walker;
- Police Community Support Officers - Louise Jones and Tony McIntosh and Police Constable Matthew Bendall;
- The many other people who work to make our village a better place such as school governors and organisations that provide for education, recreation and religious activities.

The Chair thanked Mr Andrew Dando for providing the marquee liner, which had been used to decorate Beacon Hall. This had been offered free of charge, in order to showcase the hall as a potential venue for weddings and other events.

Meetings held during 2015/16:

- The Parish Council has held 46 meetings during the past year including sub-committee meetings and two additional meetings to discuss Greenlands Road and the West of England Spatial Plan. This equates to over 700 councillor hours (or about a month), not including the amount of hours spent preparing for meetings, reading pre-reading, visiting sites etc.
- For the next year 2016/17 there will be fewer committee meetings, but they will be supplemented by Advisory Panels that will look at specific issues and there will be more Full Council meetings.

Other achievements during 2015/16:

- The day to day work of running a busy organisation and maintaining our buildings, play areas and cemetery, including providing 24hr 7 day a week cover.
- Moving from a spreadsheet accounts system to SAGE.
- Improving our green spaces.
- Completing projects such as the Skate Park, the Christmas Tea Party and the Garden of Remembrance.

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- Holding open meetings.

Areas that need further work:

- Methods of communicating with residents, councillors, B&NES Council and other organisations, e.g. improving the Parish Council and Beacon Hall websites;
- Issuing minutes in a timely manner;
- Finalising agreements with Peasedown St John Football Club and the Scouts over use of the Recreation Ground;
- Finalising an agreement with Persimmon Homes regarding the Parish Council taking on redundant land;
- Reviewing working practices to ensure business continuity.

Relationship with other public bodies in the area

The Chair finished by talking about the Parish Council's interaction with B&NES Council, Somer Valley Forum, Avon Local Councils Association and Parish Liaison Group.

Currently, a particularly important part of this work concerns the development of the West of England Strategic Plan and Joint Transport Plan.

Report from the Planning & Environment Committee

Cllr Karen Walker, Chair of the Planning & Environment Committee, introduced the rest of the Committee consisting of Cllrs Tom Clifford (Vice Chair), Mandy Clarke, Richard Clarke, Claire Parfitt and Jonathan Rich. Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2015, the Planning & Environment Committee has met 12 times and considered 28 planning applications, including: a barn conversion at Woodborough Stud Farm, the extension of Hillcrest Doctors' Surgery to provide additional clinical rooms, an eco-friendly single storey dwelling on Church Road and the Reserved Matters associated with the planning application for 89 dwellings off Greenlands Road. The Committee has also been involved with five planning enforcement issues, B&NES Council's Placemaking Plan and Open Green Spaces Strategy.

Report from the Policy & Personnel Committee

Cllr Lesley Mansell, Vice-Chair of the Policy & Personnel Committee, gave a brief report on behalf of the Chair, Cllr Jonathan Rich, who was away on business.

One of the main issues the Committee had been considering over the past year had been the workload within the Parish Office; an exercise on all tasks and timings had been undertaken, to help identify areas for efficiency improvements. The reduction in the number of Parish Council meetings will further assist. Cllr Mansell offered a vote of thanks to all the Parish Council staff for their hard work over the past year, especially to the Parish Clerk.

Un-audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2016:

Cllr Andrew Larcombe gave a brief statement on the un-audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016. The accounts will be available to view in the Parish Office after the Full Council meeting on 17th May 2016, as in accordance with the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights.

As in previous years the council awarded grants to organisations of benefit to the residents of Peasedown St John. These were:

- Swan Transport – Access to Health (community transport service);
- PCC of Peasedown St John (for maintenance of St John's Church graveyard);
- Peasedown St. John W.I. (to publicise the new group);
- Peasedown Albion Football Club (to purchase new kit for the under 15s team);
- St. John's Church (for Development of a Breakfast Club and Lunctime Football Club for PSJ Primary School)

The council also awarded £1,750 for community events:

- Sponsorship of entertainment/bands at Party in the Park
- the annual firework display at Peasedown St John Cricket Club.

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The Community Grants window for 2015-16 is now open; application forms are available at this meeting and the closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 29th April 2016.

5. Questions for the Chair

There followed an opportunity for the electorate of the Parish to raise any matters of concern. Although no questions had been submitted in writing beforehand, the following issues were raised at the meeting:

- Q. Hedges on Orchard Way continue to be a problem. When will this be addressed?
- A. The Parish Council has recently amended their Overgrown Vegetation Policy; the process now notifies B&NES Council at first report and so this should speed up the process of enforcement notices being issued and subsequent action taken.

- Q. Why was a raised bus platform installed at the end of Orchard Way?
- A. The installation of the new bus shelters and associated works were undertaken recently by B&NES Council. The bus platform being queried is used by school buses.

It was commented that the flower beds on roundabouts and borders had been looking particularly colourful this year and a vote of thanks was offered to the Parish Caretaker and his helpers for doing such a good job.

The Chair finished by offering a vote of thanks to the Parish Council staff and Parish Councillors for their work over the past year.

6. Presentations with a focus on Open Green Spaces

- a. Keith Weller from the Bath Ramblers Association gave an informative talk about the services provided by Avon Ramblers Volunteers in partnership with B&NES Council, to maintain public rights of way in the wider Bath & N E Somerset area.
- b. Parish Clerk, Tanya West, described all the work carried out by the Parish Council to look after the open green spaces within the parish.

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

Cllr Ian Gilchrist, Chair of B&NES Council, received the "peppercorn rent" for the Beacon Hall and Field for the coming year from Cllr Kathy Thomas, Chair of the Parish Council.

8. Recognition of long service to the village

The Chair thanked all of the following for their years of service to the village:

Derek Kennedy - who sadly died last year- and was acknowledged for over 20 years' service to Beacon Hall at the Annual Village Meeting in May 2013.

John Bowell – Parish Councillor for many years who sadly died in early 2016.

Peter Duppa Miller – who sadly died in May 2015, after many years of service to his own local council in Coombe Hay, but also many years of work with the Avon Local Councils' Association providing support to other local parishes and acting as a liaison with B&NES Council on their behalf.

Dawn Savine – who retired in 2015 after more than 15 years as the school crossing patrol person at Peasedown St John Primary School. A presentation was made to her at the November 2015 Full Council meeting.

The meeting finished with presentations to **Vera Cowley, Ann Onslow, Marion Millard** and **Pam Wright**, in recognition of their work as volunteers for Peasedown St John Lunch Club, from which they will retire in June 2016. Pam received a Civic Award from the Parish Council to thank her for more than 20 years of running the lunch club as a service to older residents in the village.

The formal part of the meeting concluded at 8.30pm, followed by an informal meeting and refreshments.