

Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 2nd April 2019 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

Present:

Cllr Barbara Bailey (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr John Bailey,
Mr Rupert Bevan (Chair, Radstock Town Council),
Mrs Mo Boys (Camerton & Peasedown Croquet Club),
Mr Adrian Brimson (MSN & Radstock Dial-a-Ride),
Mr Calvin Bird (Snow Warden Scheme),
Mr John Bull (Somer Valley Walking Festival),
Mr Aubrey Chegwyn,
Mrs Kate Chegwyn,
Cllr Tom Clifford (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Ken Coles (Braysdown Allotments Committee),
Ms Erica Cusick (Peasedown Social & Wellbeing Group),
Cllr Jo Davis (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mrs Linda Day (Chair of the Board of Governors, Peasedown Primary School),
Mrs Diana Duckling,
Cllr Stephen Goodwin (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mrs Joy Gosz (Peasedown Residents' Association),
Mr Michael Gregory (Peasedown St John Cricket Club),
Mr Ron Hopkins (Vice-Chair, Westfield Parish Council),
Mrs Ros Hurford (Peasedown St John WI),
Mr Colin Inman (Arleen Coaches),
Mr William Jones (Braysdown Allotments Committee),
Cllr Simon Kidd (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Karl Kilburn (Peasedown Scout Group),
Ms Sam Kilburn,
Mr Damian Knollys (Headteacher, Peasedown Primary School),
Cllr Andy Larcombe (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Ms Sabrina Lucas (Bath Area Play Project),
Ms Anne Lyons (Chair, Paulton Parish Council),
PCSO Tony McIntosh (Avon & Somerset Police),
Cllr Linda Morgan (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Conor Ogilvie-Davidson (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Claire Parfitt (Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Jonathan Rich (Vice Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Cllr Kathy Thomas (Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council),
Mr Brian Wilson (Camerton & Peasedown Croquet Club),
Representatives of the Waggoneers Motor Cycle Club,

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

A total of 60 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 Sarah Bevan (B&NES Ward Councillor), Cllr Mandy Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Cllr Richard Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council), Mr Dave Dixon (B&NES Council Officer Community Engagement), Mr

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Andrew Fraser (Peasedown Art Group), Ms Helen Freeman (Mercy in Action), PCSO Louise Jones (Avon & Somerset Police), Cllr David Orme (Dunkerton Parish Council), Anita Phillips (Peasedown Guides), Mr Sam Plummer (Peasedown Youth Hub), Jacob Rees-Mogg (Local MP), Mrs Gabrielle Stanley (Zumba, Beacon Hall), Cllr Karen Walker (B&NES Ward Councillor), Ms Shannon Webb (Mercy in Action), Ms Alison Wells (B&NES Council Community Engagement Officer).

3) Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 10th April 2018

Minutes of the previous Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 10th April 2018 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 June 2018 (minute C035 – 19/06/2018, refers); this decision was ratified at the Annual Village Meeting accordingly.

4) Parish Councillors

The Chair introduced the Parish Councillors present at the meeting – Cllrs Barbara Bailey, Tom Clifford, Jo Davis, Stephen Goodwin, Simon Kidd, Andrew Larcombe, Linda Morgan, Conor Ogilvie-Davidson, Claire Parfitt and Jonathan Rich. She went on to thank all Councillors for the many hours of work undertaken in the past year.

There are currently 16 Parish Councillors and 1 vacancy. During the year there have been several resignations and subsequent co-options. The following had resigned during the past council year: Nathan Hartley, Edward Jones, David Walker and Karen Walker.

5) Volunteers

The Chair thanked the following who have helped with planting, tidying and running the allotments, snow clearance, and locking the cemetery when staff are on annual leave:

Calvin Bird, Dianne Bird, Aubrey Chegwyn, Ken Coles, Les Gillard-Sprake, Mike Illott, Bill Jones, Dave Jones, Gil Jones, Jill Souter and Jane Whatley.

Also the following who have helped with the Christmas tea party:

Christine Clarke, Stella Clarke, John Davis, Neil Hopkins, Sam Hopkins, Sharon Kidd, Jo Larcombe, Pauline Reynolds, Les Sprake and Tracey Wilmot.

6) B&NES Ward Councillors

Thanks were offered to Cllrs Sarah Bevan Karen Walker for their work for the village.

7) Police

Thanks were offered to Police Community Support Officers Louise Jones and Tony McIntosh and Police Constable Matthew Bendall.

8) Thanks were offered to other organisations of benefit to the village, including:

- **Local Businesses**
- **School Governors**
- **Organisations that provide for education, recreation and religious activities**
- **Uniformed organisations**
- **Many more individuals and groups many of whom work on a charitable basis.**

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

Mr Damian Knollys gave a report on progress at Peasedown St John Primary School over the past year and his comments on the recent Ofsted inspection. Slides from the talk are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

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

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Due to purdah restrictions prior to the Local Council Elections it had not been possible to get a representative from B&NES Council to receive the "peppercorn rent" for the Beacon Hall and Field for the coming year. 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.

11) Report from Peasedown St. John Parish Council Chairs of Council and Standing Committees including a statement on the un-audited Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019

a. **Executive Committee:** Cllr Jonathan Rich summarised some of the work carried out by the Executive Committee in the preceding year.

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2018, the Executive Committee has met as an Advisory Panel once a month, normally the week before the Full Council Meeting. Their role has been:

- To monitor the Order of Known Business and implementation of projects
- To advise the council on setting of priorities and to monitor agreed priorities
- To keep council appraised of progress against agreed priorities
- To support the Clerk in meeting objectives within realistic timescales
- To improve communications and understanding between committee chairs.
- To improve communications and understanding between councillors
- To make recommendations to Full Council for the setting and monitoring of priorities

Project work has included:

- Putting on a Christmas Tea Party for approx. 80 Senior Residents
- Upgrading some of the older play equipment at the Recreation Field
- Upgrading the streetlights to LED
- Installing a new Multi-Use Games Area on Beacon Field.
- A successful and well attended event to commemorate the Centenary Armistice was held on 11th November at Beacon Hall which included the lighting of the beacon. Thank you to church, school and WI all those who helped to make this a successful event.

The slides from this presentation are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

b. **Report from the Finance & Amenities Committee:** Given by Cllr Andrew Larcombe, Chair of the Finance & Amenities Committee.

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2018, the F&A Committee has met 5 times (with a further meeting scheduled for late April). The Burial Sub-Committee affiliated to this Committee has met once.

Attendance at Committee and Advisory Panel meetings equates to over 100 councillor hours spent at these meetings.

It does not include any additional hours that councillors on the F&A Committee do undertaking bank reconciliations/checks etc. as part of the scrutiny checks required under our Financial Regulations.

Project and maintenance work on:

Ashgrove Cemetery:

- Due to a generous donation from we were able to extend the pergola further towards the memorial garden and plant some new specimen shrubs (the shrubs were selected to provide year-round interest and have been planted so they are able to grow into their natural shapes). Thank you to Peter Provest for enabling this.

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- This year we have had to start a new un-consecrated section of the cemetery. We have taken our first two burials in this area. We have on order plot marker slabs for this section, which are due to be installed this month.
- As part of improved signage around the village we now have a new sign at the entrance to the cemetery.

Braysdown Allotments:

- The Caretaker has undertaken various maintenance works to the allotment site over the past year, this includes repairs to the pot holes on the track and car park. Also, the cutting back of unruly brambles in the hedgerow.
- Unfortunately, the allotments have been subject to several shed break-ins over the past year. We have been working closely with the local police about improved security on the site. Options being investigated are lighting at the site, security cameras, installation of shed shackles and encouraging plot holders to not store items of value at the site.
- Third Annual Allotment Barbecue – The grants reports will cover this later
- The Advisory Panel has met four times during the past year to inspect the site and consider requests from allotment holders.

Beacon Hall:

- We have changed the outside lighting at Beacon Hall to LEDs. This will be more cost efficient and provide improved lighting.
- We have had some issues of anti-social behaviour from youths using the toilet facilities at the hall and there are plans to install a doorbell camera to assist with lone working security. This is the initial step in improving security arrangements.
- Over the next year we hope to focus on improvements to the internal lighting, CCTV and storage.

Recreation Ground:

- We now have planning permission agreed to build a new club house, new storage facility for the scouts and ancillary car park. We are in the pre-commencement stage, with all parties involved, looking to agree the logistics for the build.
- The planning application was submitted by the Parish Council due to it being on land for which the Parish Council is a Trustee and Parish Council receive a reduced rate for planning application fees. However, the actual development will be paid for by Peasedown Miners FC and the Scout Group respectively.

Ecewiche Green:

- One of the mature Ash trees dropped a branch this year; with a particularly dry summer the weight of the tree caused this tree to drop a limb. The split was tidied, and the tree is doing fine.

Planting on roundabouts and verges:

- The floral displays looked good again this year, however, we cannot undertake the planting-out without help from our volunteers (so thank you to them once again).
- Unfortunately, we have again been subject to several bouts of vandalism on the Dunkerton roundabout with several of the flower beds being destroyed by vehicles intentionally being driven over; we have now removed these beds and repositioned another. We will be installing a much smaller bed with hardier plants centrally on the roundabout.
- We have cut back a section of hedge that runs along Underleaf Way to Ecewiche Green. This piece of hedge contained several Elm trees which had died or were dying. They have been removed and we will continue to maintain this as a shrub hedge.
- The trees on Parish Council maintained land have been surveyed this year. We are yet to receive all the reports but will review them at future meetings and undertake any necessary action required.

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.

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Grant application forms for 2019/20 are available to take away at this meeting.
The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 5th April 2019.

Un-audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2018:

Cllr Andrew Larcombe gave a brief statement on the un-audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2019.

The finalised accounts will be available to view in the Parish Office after the Full Council meeting on 21st May 2018, in accordance with the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights.

c. Report from the Personnel Committee: Given by Cllr Tom Clifford, Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2018, the Personnel Committee has met 5 times.

The Committee has considered various matters including:

- Staff and Councillor training
- Salary reviews and pay rates

The Committee is responsible for both staff and councillor training.

Various training has been undertaken during the year; some in-house and some off-site. (images on slides to be updated to reflect training)

Examples of training undertaken in the past year:

All councillors and staff – becoming more familiar with SharePoint and software

Councillors – Social media

Office staff – VAT training, CiLCA

The Personnel Committee has delegated responsibility for the Parish Council staff who are: Tanya West, Debbie Parish, Tracy Edge, Jim Murtagh, Chris Champion and Luke Tatar.

We have reviewed all the staff salaries this year, to try and better align them with the national councils' rates and to ensure all staff are paid at least the living wage.

d. Report from the Planning & Environment Committee: Given by Cllr Claire Parfitt, Chair of the Planning & Environment Committee.

Since the Annual Full Council meeting in May 2018, the P&E Committee has met once. This year the set-up has been slightly different with the majority of the planning applications being determined by Full Council.

A total of 37 planning applications have been considered so far this year; site visits have been carried out for some applications where either the applicant has invited us to attend or if the application was more complicated and we have asked to attend.

Although we always respond to all applications, B&NES do have the final say and it is not always what we recommend.

Approximately 12 enforcement cases have been reported (some have been ongoing for well over a year). We report them to B&NES Council to investigate and they come back to us with explanation on their decisions.

We reviewed the HELAA (Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment) and fed back to B&NES Council our comments on the potential development sites within the village. This information helps to form updates to B&NES Local Plan.

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We also recently reviewed the draft updated version of the Joint Local Transport Plan. Although it was reviewed, the way the questions are worded on the consultation it was felt best for councillors to respond on an individual basis rather than putting a joint formal comment from the parish council.

The Planning & Environment Committee was delegated the following projects/responsibilities from Full Council:

- **Grit bins/Winter Support:** The Parish Council's grit bins have been put to good use this winter. Additional bags of rock salt will be purchased to replenish stock levels. We have received requests for new bins and these will all be considered in the new council financial year. We are also currently investigating (with B&NES Council) whether the missing bin from Church Road has been installed elsewhere in the village.
- **Signage:** The signage project around the village is ongoing. We are continuing to add new signs to the areas of land we manage. The village entrance sign from Wellow approach was installed this time last year, however, the contractors who undertook this work had not completed it to standard this installation has only just been rectified. The information boards element of the signage project continues to be worked on.
- **Waste Bins:** In the main this project was completed last year; however, new dog waste bins have been ordered in response to residents and farmer requests. They are due to be delivered tomorrow and will be installed in the following locations:
 - The public right of way by Dunkerton roundabout
 - Bottom of footpath to Splott Farm – Withyditch Lane
 - Top of footpath to Splott Farm – Firgrove Lane

12) Report from Avon & Somerset Constabulary – PCSO Tony McIntosh

PCSO Tony McIntosh began by mentioning changes to the beat team which would now cover a much wider area, including Paulton.

Crime levels for Peasedown St John for the past 12 months were down across all areas and levels of anti-social behaviour were low compared with a number of other areas.

The local beat team continue to hold Beat Surgeries each month and in future these will be held alternately at Circle Hospital Café and The Meeting Place Café in the centre of the village.

The local Beat Team have also started a new "Mini Police" initiative which is being piloted at Peasedown Primary School for a group of children in Year 5. It is hoped that this will encourage community engagement and improve communications between the police and the community in years to come.

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

13) Questions for the Council

Question 1

Related to why the budget for staff salaries for the 2018/19 financial year was so high, when it appeared (from figures in the minutes of the Finance & Amenities Committee) that only half of this amount had been spent in January 2019.

Response:

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The Parish Council uses B&NES Council to administer staff salaries and is invoiced quarterly for this service. Due to the timing of the invoices received from B&NES Council, the accounts in January 2019 showed only two quarters of the salary bill for the year, so only half of the total sum for the full financial year.

Question 2

We need to fund the village, but the increase seems disproportionate compared with previous years. Why weren't residents more involved in this decision?

Response:

- The Parish Council has been investing in infrastructure in the village and also has to cover the cost of maintenance.
- A recent IT up-grade has resulted in added expense.
- In previous years the Parish Council has been diligent at keeping increases in the precept to a minimum and a small amount of money had been taken from reserves for the previous year and needed to be topped-up, on the advice of the internal auditor.
- The increase in precept for this year is still only £2.80 per month on average.
- It has been lovely to see so many people attend the meeting and get involved and it would be great if even more people would attend.
- Councillors are always available on social media.
- Finance & Amenities Committee meetings are open to the public.

14) Presentations were received from the following organisations providing feedback on how their 2018 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, these reports were presented by Cllr Simon Kidd.

- a. Party in the Park – Sponsorship
- b. Peasedown Cricket Club – Fireworks Display – Mike Gregory
- c. Wansdyke Play Association
- d. Peasedown Methodist Church – ‘Holiday at Home’
- e. Peasedown St John Scout Group – Karl Kilburn
- f. 2nd Peasedown St John Brownies & 1st Peasedown St John Guides
- g. Bath Area Play Project – Sabrina Lucas
- h. Peasedown Social & Wellbeing Group – Erica Cusick
- i. Peasedown St John Residents’ Association – Joy Gosz
- j. Braysdown Allotments Committee – Cllr Claire Parfitt
- k. MSN & Radstock Dial-a-Ride – Adrian Brimson
- l. Somer Valley Walking Festival – John Bull
- m. Shoscombe After School Allotment Club

The meeting concluded at 9.03pm.

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