

# Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting, held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, BA2 8SN

## Present:

Cllr Gill Auld (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Fiona Carr (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Mandy Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Richard Clarke (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Ms Emma Dando (Deputy Head, Peasedown St John Primary School),  
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),  
Cllr Howard Hartley (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Gavin Heathcote (Peasedown St John Parish Council/B&NES Council),  
Cllr Simon Kidd (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Ms Ashia Kusawake (Bath All Starz Cheerleading),  
Cllr Andy Larcombe (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Ray Love (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
PCSO Tony McIntosh (Avon & Somerset Police),  
Cllr Jonathan Rich (Chair, Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Cllr Les Sprake (Peasedown St John Parish Council),  
Mrs Jill Souter (Braysdown Allotments Committee),  
Cllr Kathy Thomas (Peasedown St John Parish Council).  
Cllr Daniel Walker (Peasedown St John Parish Council)

Parish Council Staff: Deborah Parish, Tanya West.

A total of 45 people attended the meeting.

## 1) Welcome

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

The Chair welcomed and/or thanked the following for their service to the village:

- Volunteers who have helped to maintain the planted areas, with a special mention to Roger Dix (who has now completed Chapter 8 training), Mike Ilott and Gill Rogers, all of whom spent many hours weeding and planting, often on a weekly basis.
- B&NES Ward Councillors Gavin Heathcote and Karen Walker.
- Members of Avon & Somerset Constabulary including PCSO Tony McIntosh (who was present at the meeting), PCSO Louise Jones and PC Matt Bendall.

## 2) Apologies for absence had been received from:

Cllrs Conor Ogilvie-Davidson and John Ogilvie-Davidson (Peasedown St John Parish Council) who were absent due to personal reasons, Mandy Eades (Line Dance with ME), Glen Harrington (Committee Member, Braysdown Allotments), Caroline Haworth (Bath Area Play Project), PCSO Louise Jones (Avon & Somerset Police), Ruth Noall (Headteacher, Peasedown St John Primary School), Linda Parker (President, Peasedown St John WI), Gabrielle Stanley (Pilates), Rev. Matthew Street (St John's Church).

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### **3) Minutes of the Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Minutes of the previous Annual Village Meeting held on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 had been circulated in advance. It was **resolved** to accept these as a true and correct record of the meeting.

### **4) Report from a representative of Peasedown St John Primary School**

Emma Dando, Deputy Head of Peasedown St John Primary School, provided a report of activities at the school over the past 12 months.

After a poor Ofsted report in 2019, the school had been determined to improve. Since that time there had been two changes of headteacher, the current headteacher, Ruth Noall, being the third. It had been a challenging time, but in September 2023 they received a good Ofsted rating.

A major infrastructure project had been undertaken in the past year to install a ground source heat pump. Much of this work had taken place during the 2023 summer holiday and was completed just in time for the start of the new school year.

The school had also updated their website and had received some funding from CURO to re-develop their conservation and gardening area. Local residents would be welcome to visit (call to make an appointment in advance), and anyone wishing to volunteer at the school, particularly with the conservation and gardening area, would be welcome as well.

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

PCSO Tony McIntosh's presentation covered the following points:

- Details of the local team, including a new Neighbourhood Inspector, Jon Nash.
- The area including Peasedown St John is the largest in B&NES and the team spend the majority of their time in Peasedown St John.
- Crime figures for Peasedown St John for 2022-23 show a slight rise in crime overall, but a reduction in violent crime.
- Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour have been fairly stable – there were a few issues earlier in the year which were dealt with quite quickly.
- Due to lack of funding, PCSO numbers will be falling. Some staff will be made redundant, and others will not be replaced when they leave. This is likely to affect the service across the area in future. There will be with fewer PCSOs available to cover the same area, so visits will be less frequent.
- Lastly, in response to recent bank fraud scams, a new "159" system has been introduced. If a member of the public believes they have been contacted by a scammer, they should hang up and dial 159. They will then be asked some questions regarding the incident and will be put through to their bank to investigate further.

### **6) Ward Councillor Report**

Ward Cllrs Gavin Heathcote and Karen Walker were present at the meeting. The main focus of their presentation was to inform residents about B&NES Council's Local Plan for Peasedown St John, which is currently open for comment.

Plans being considered by B&NES Council for Peasedown St John include: the addition of up to 200 homes, expansion of Bath Business Park, generation of renewable energy from a solar PV farm to

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the south of the village, a new mobility hub on the A367 to allow for on going public transport travel into Bath, and highway improvements to existing junctions.

The Ward Cllrs had been giving consideration to the impact of this development on local services such as the primary school, and whether local residents would gain any direct benefit from the solar farm. The issue of development just outside the parish boundary was also raised, as there were other areas being considered for development between Peasedown St John and Radstock, which might have an even greater impact on local services and infrastructure. In response to a query asking whether the doctors' surgery had been consulted, it was mentioned that B&NES have consulted with local Health Services, but it was noted that Hillcrest Surgery already have 7000 people on their books. Residents were encouraged to have their say on the plans which would be open for comment until 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### **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. B&NES Ward Councillor Karen Walker received the "peppercorn rent" for the Beacon Hall and Field for the coming year.

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

Cllr Jonathan Rich introduced a change of format for this year, which was a video presentation regarding the work of the different committees over the past year, rather than the usual PowerPoint presentations. It was hoped that residents would find it a more engaging way to keep informed of the Parish Council's activities and that it would reach a wider audience. The video is available to view on the Parish Council's website and Facebook page.

### **Un-audited Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2024:**

Cllr Andrew Larcombe gave a presentation on the un-audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024, which will be available to view on the Parish Council's website.

The finalised accounts would be available to view in the Parish Office and on the website after the Full Council meeting in June 2024, in accordance with the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights.

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

### **9) Questions for the Chair**

There were three questions for the Chair, as follows:

*a) What process is in place to ensure that queries made in person, by phone, answerphone or email to the Parish Office are logged, responded to and then dealt with in an efficient and timely manner?*

Response: The Parish Office is currently in the process of setting up an e-mail logging system called "Freshdesk". A ticket number would be assigned to each incoming enquiry by email, phone or via our website/Facebook page. There would then be a clear system of monitoring

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until the issue is resolved. There is also the opportunity from this system to run reports to identify patterns of frequently asked questions, how long queries take to get resolved etc. Councillors will have access to these reports.

It should be noted that Peasedown Open Forum would not be routinely monitored, and anyone wishing to raise a query via Facebook should do so via the official Parish Council Facebook page.

*b) Could we please have an update on the CURO development off Greenlands Road?*

Response: CURO have advised that they are continuing to liaise with the local planning authority to discharge the pre-commencement planning conditions at Greenlands Road.

They are also working on the detailed design of the engineering elements of the site, ahead of a start on site later this year. Residents may notice surveys and investigations being carried out on site.

*c) Can something be done about the hedges and brambles around Orchard Way, some of which are badly in need of cutting back?*

Response: Ownership of many of these pockets of land is currently being transferred to the Parish Council from the housing developer. Any current maintenance issues will be addressed as part of the transfer and the land will be regularly maintained once under Parish Council ownership.

*d) The Chair had been asked to mention the **Volunteer Gardening Group** which would be meeting at **10am most Thursday mornings at Ashgrove Cemetery**. New volunteers would be extremely welcome – please contact the Parish Office or Cllrs Audrey Gillard-Sprake or Howard Hartley for further details.*

**10) Presentations were received from the following organisations providing feedback on how their 2023/24 Community Grant awards were spent** [any presentation slides from these reports are available to view on the Parish Council's website]. Unfortunately, Bath Area Play Project were unable to attend, but had submitted a presentation.

- a. Avon & Somerset Constabulary/Peasedown Primary School Mini Police – Coach travel costs to Police horse and dog section and promotional boards for use at events and activities.
- b. Bath Allstarz – Coach travel costs to cheerleading competition and Summer Fun Days at Beacon Hall.
- c. Bath Area Play Project – Summer Play Day at Beacon Field.
- d. Braysdown Allotments Committee – Allotments BBQ.
- e. Peasedown St John Cricket Club – Fireworks Display.

**Concluding remarks:**

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

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

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*At the end of the meeting, the Chair received the following **written feedback** from attendees of the meeting:*

- i) 'I just wanted to congratulate you on an informative and enjoyable AGM. I particularly enjoyed the film, a much more up to date way of who does what'.*
- ii) 'Thank you for an informative meeting'.*
- iii) 'When considering audio/visual equipment, please include a loop system and radio microphone and encourage speakers to use it!'*

DRAFT