



PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN
Tel: 01761 433686 E-mail: clerk@peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.peasedownstjohnparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council held on 26th November 2024 at 7.00pm at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) Gill Auld; Fiona Carr; Jo Davis; Audrey Gillard-Sprake; Gavin Heathcote; Simon Kidd; Andrew Larcombe; John Ogilvie-Davidson; Jonathan Rich (Chair); Les Sprake; Kathy Thomas; Daniel Walker.

In attendance: Joy Luxford - RFO

Public Session – No members of the public were present.

Unfortunately, a representative from McLoughlin Planning and Vistry Group PLC was unable to join the meeting, so the meeting started at 7.06pm

MINUTES

C069 – 26/11/2024	Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest
The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). No declarations were raised and no recording of the meeting was performed.	
C070 – 26/11/2024	Attendance and Apologies for Absence
Cllr Daniel Walker was late (arrived at 8.05 pm / C074) and Cllr Mandy Clarke, Cllr Richard Clarke and Cllr Conor Ogilvie-Davidson were absent and sent apologies. These were noted. Cllr Ray Love was absent without apologies.	
C071 – 26/11/2024	Minutes
i. It was resolved to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25 th June 2024 after three amendments to the draft minutes received from Cllr Larcombe to improve accuracy. ii. It was resolved to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24 th September 2024. iii. It was resolved to sign the above listed minutes.	
C072 – 26/11/2024	Items for Urgent Report
No items have been brought to the attention of the Chair, prior to the meeting, and that, in their opinion, should be reported on as a matter of urgency.	
C073 – 26/11/2024	Casual Vacancy
No applications have been received for the current Casual Vacancy. Action: It was resolved to continue to advertise the casual vacancy position regularly on social media. Cllr Heathcote mentioned interest from a local resident and was encouraged to ask them to complete the necessary application. Cllr Carr suggested the casual vacancy could be mentioned at the Christmas party and Cllr Heathcote will mention at the youth council to encourage applicants.	
C074 – 26/11/2024	Council Committee Updates
Cllrs received updates on the following Amenities & Facilities Committee – Meeting held on 19 th November 2024. ➤ Draft minutes of the meeting were provided in pre-reading. ➤ It was noted that the wildlife pond project was delegated to A&F to project manage, with funds allocated. The project had been accepted by Full Council with a caveat included where Cllrs agreed to do majority of work with minimal input from staff. It was noted that a significant amount of work is needed before planning can be applied for, particularly as there is now a requirement within planning applications to demonstrate biodiversity net gain. Given conflicting demands the project may take longer to implement than originally planned. It was also noted that the shape of pond will change as it needs to go around trees (likely to be kidney shape).	

- Beacon Field and Jubilee Garden – In relation to repairs to the play equipment (and with reference to A&F055 – 19/11/2024), it was **resolved** that £447.05 plus VAT is allocated from Infrequent Operation Expenditure to meet the cost of the parts for the Pollux Play Equipment on Beacon Field as detailed on the Kompan invoice.
- Pathways – There is already £5k in an ear marked reserve (EMR) and (with reference to A&F055 – 19/11/2024) there was a discussion to add £25,000 from the General Reserve (3100) to Pathway Improvements Annual Allocations (3136). This was not agreed in the meeting.
- There was clarification from Cllr Thomas that the Christmas Tree lights will be switched on 29th November 2024 as the Christmas lights are already on.
- It was **resolved** (with reference to A&F056 – 19/11/2024) to obtain quotes for a tree survey of the entire Parish Council estate from three companies. This supersedes the quotes already obtained (C050 – 08/08/2023) for part of the estate.

Action: To obtain 3 quotes for a tree survey of the entire Parish Council Estate

Action: To print out a complete map of the Parish Council Estate to be shared with Cllrs and in Beacon Hall, highlighting Persimmon land transferred in.

Planning Committee – Advisory Panel Meetings held on 1st October 2024 and 5th November and 12th November.

Action: To provide a copy of the maps on plain paper to Cllr Ogilvie-Davidson.

Staffing Committee – Meeting held on Tuesday 3rd September 2024.

- Cllrs received an update regarding staff retention and recruitment, following the appointment of a new Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).
- It was noted that the General and Maintenance Manager recruitment is on-going with interviews on 28th November 2024 to be undertaken by Cllr Rich, Cllr Larcombe and the RFO, with the aim for a start date in early 2025.
- There have been a few Staffing Committee meetings held under confidential session as we have a staff member off-sick, which has surfaced a need for greater clarity over prioritization. It was agreed that Cllrs would feed any outstanding or needed tasks or actions to Cllr Kidd, so that tasks can be prioritized for the staff team. It was also noted that Cllr Kidd would meet regularly with the office staff to assist with prioritization of Council tasks and help examine methods of efficiency. This would also focus on storage of information so that all staff can access data easily, effectively, in a searchable and retrievable way. This process will be reviewed in January by the Staffing Committee to ensure that it is boosting communication and helping prioritization.
- The Staffing Committee also discussed the aim to hold a roundtable meeting between staff and Cllrs in 2025 to socialize and manage expectations more effectively going forward.
- It was **resolved**, to provide sickness cover the office staff could be paid for up to an additional 25 hours per week (spread across the team as and if needed) from November 2024 until the end of January 2025.
- Appreciation was passed to the office team for the extra work being undertaken to cover sickness arrangements.

Cllr Daniel Walker arrived at 8:05pm

The forthcoming Standing Committee meetings were noted:

- 1) **Amenities & Facilities Committee** – Meeting scheduled to be held on 7th January 2025.
- 2) **Finance & Governance Committee** – Meeting scheduled to be held on 21st January 2025.
- 3) **Planning Committee** – Meeting scheduled to be held on 10th December 2024.
- 4) **Staffing Committee** – Meeting scheduled to be held on 3rd December 2024.

C075 - 26/11/2024 Business Continuity

Cllrs considered the issue of Business Continuity for the Parish Council.

It was **resolved** that the Chairman and Chair of Staffing Committee be given a full set of keys and codes for all locks throughout the estate including fire alarm codes.

It was **resolved** that a full audit be performed by the Staffing Committee to review who has access to keys / codes throughout the estate and for what reason.

C076 – 26/11/2024

Financial Matters & Schedule of Payments

Cllr Larcombe provided thanks to the RFO for keeping the management of finance up to date and to Cllr Davis and Cllr Rich for their continued support in approving payments.

- In accordance with the Financial Regulations, and after review of the financial reports, **it was resolved to**
- i. ratify those payments, already made in relation to the accounts for year ending 31st March 2025 as included in the schedule in pre-reading.
 - ii. Note the order of business schedule.
 - iii. Note the Financial Advisory meeting scheduled for 17th December 2024 to enable Cllrs to review a first draft of the FY25/26 Budget.

Action: The RFO to investigate and resolve the system access issues for Cllr Kidd in accessing the Unity Bank account.

Action: Cllrs should submit any budget estimates to the RFO by 3rd December 2024 as pre-agreed (C062 - 24/09/2024)

Cllrs discussed youth services at the Hive after a request to provide annual support of £5k to aid the provision of an after school club. Cllrs Davis, Larcombe and Ogilvie-Davidson had visited the club and gave feedback on their observations. Cllrs discussed the benefits and drawbacks of providing on-going funding to the Hive and agreed that the Finance and Governance Committee would make a recommendation to Full Council as part of the annual budget setting round on the type and potential value of any financial contribution.

Action: The Finance and Governance Committee would make a recommendation to Full Council as part of the annual budget setting round on the type and potential value of any financial contribution to the Hive for youth services.

Cllrs also received an update on the Internal Audit Review and noted the report and recommendations. In line with the external audit recommendation, Cllrs noted the on-going independence of the Internal Auditor.

Cllr Larcombe also provided an update on the Natwest Bank Mandate as it had been discovered that there was 2 redundant accounts still active. This has been resolved with a new Mandate being submitted, which included removing 2 redundant accounts and granting the RFO access and we are awaiting action from Natwest. The RFO will chase to ensure fully resolved.

Action: The RFO to ensure NatWest have actioned our new mandate request.

C077 – 26/11/2024

Solar Panels and Insulation at Beacon Hall

Cllrs were given an update on the cork spray insulation works at Beacon Hall delivered in October and received an update on the planned dates for the solar panel works.

Cllrs **resolved to** approve and delegated to the RFO and Cllr Rich and Cllr Auld to sign the updated B&NES Beacon Hall lease to allow for the solar panel installation and **resolved to** pay the remaining £19,701.59+VAT to Thermoprotect as per invoice (provided in pre-reading).

Cllr Heathcote abstained from the vote as he is a member of the B&NES council (potential conflict of interest).

It was also noted that we will aim to reclaim our VAT in January (earlier than anticipated) to bring forward repayment date.

C078 – 26/11/2024

Project Proposals

Strategic Plan – Cllrs were provided with an update with particular reference to the informal strategic meeting on 15th November 2024 and considered a proposal to meet again to discuss a strategic plan for the Parish Council.

Action: Cllr Walker will circulate a proposed date to meet again informally to discuss mission statement, purpose and key objectives.

Action: The RFO will circulate notes from the meeting of 15th November 2024

Laptops and I pads – this item remains outstanding and so the RFO will put on the agenda for the January 2025 Finance & Governance Committee meeting to ensure it gets actioned.

Action: The RFO will put laptops and ipads on the agenda for the January 2025 Finance & Governance Committee meeting to ensure it gets actioned.

Action: Cllr Kidd to send the User Acceptance Policy to the Clerk account to be circulated to all Cllrs and staff.

C079 – 26/11/2024 Advisory Panel Updates

- A. Cllrs considered any new members to be appointed to the existing Advisory Panels. There was no volunteers for the Climate Advisory Panel.
- B. Cllrs noted the brief reports from the following Advisory Panels:
- i. **Football Club Liaison Advisory Panel** – It was noted that we are obtaining quotes to address the issue with the drain and the water coming into the canteen. **Action: The RFO to check if we have ordered the new sign now that planning permission has been granted.**
 - ii. **Parish Map & Signage Advisory Panel** – Meeting held on 11th November 2024 and outstanding actions are with the Clerk to action.
 - iii. **Land Transfer Advisory Panel** – As the Persimmon Land has now been transferred, the next step is to resolve the issue of access to the land at end of Under Knoll, as it is only accessible via the bridleway. We are awaiting B&NES to clear bridleway. **Action: The RFO to check if B&NES have been instructed to clear the Bridleway.** It was also noted to keep in mind that Council would like to initiate similar land transfer processes with the other developers.
 - iv. **Eckweek lane** – No longer is there any signage at the end of the path by Jubilee Gardens . This has been reported to B&NES via FixMyStreet.
 - v. **Seasonal Events Advisory Panel** – It was **resolved to** commission a video for the Annual Village Meeting (in line with the process adopted last year and discussed at the last two F&G meetings F&G022 – 08/08/2024 & F&G033 – 15/10/2024) up to the value of £1,100 and that we engage with Helena Midgley Films to produce this video. The budget to be taken from Infrequent Operational Expenditure on the proviso that we promote the video including on the newsletter and updated website (this to be pursued as a separate project).
 - vi. **Christmas Party** – Cllrs noted the logistics around this event and agreed to volunteer as needed.
 - vii. **Recommendation to take part in Beacon Lighting for 80th Anniversary of VE Day, 8/5/2025.** Cllrs **resolved to** take part in the Beacon Lighting on 8/5/2025 and holding a separate event in Beacon Hall on 10/5/2025 with a proposed budget of up to £3,000.
- C. Cllrs noted that dates were still to be confirmed for the following Advisory Panels:
- i. **Parish Map and Signage Advisory Panel** – Date to be confirmed.
 - ii. **Seasonal Events Advisory Panel** – Date to be confirmed.
 - iii. **Climate & Environment Advisory Panel** – Date to be confirmed.

C080 – 26/11/2024 Correspondence, Complaints & Issues

Cllrs briefly reviewed items of complaints and issues received since the last meeting that should be brought to the Council's attention.

C081 – 26/11/2024 Future Agenda Items & Cllr Questions

An opportunity was provided to the RFO for requests for possible future agenda items and to raise questions on items not otherwise covered on the agenda. **It was suggested that it would be helpful to have a future session on the B&NES local plan changes from the updated national mandate since the change of government.**

C082 – 26/11/2024 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 28th January 2024 at 7pm at the Beacon Hall.
Meeting closed at 9:17pm