

BISHOPSTONE GROUP PARISH COUNCIL

*Minutes of the Bishopstone Group
Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 1st September 2021 at 7.30pm
in Stretton Sugwas Village Hall.*

PRESENT: Councillor John Macklin (Chairman), Cllr R Morgan; Cllr M Holmes; Cllr C Draper; Cllr Lewis Goldwater Cllr S Knights; and Cllr S Keefe.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk) Ward Cllr David Hitchiner. Mr Allan Johnson - New Bridge Community Centre Charity
1 member of the public present

The Chairman welcomed those present to the September meeting.

Minutes

- 1. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr L. Handscomb; Cllr S Crump.
- 2. No declarations of interest** or written requests for dispensations were received.
- 3. The minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 7th July 2021 were accepted to be a true record and it was unanimously agreed they be adopted and signed by the Chairman.

4. New Bridge Community Centre

Mr Allan Johnson from the New Bridge Community Centre Chairty attended the meeting and read out a letter which confirmed that the NBCC charity had held a general meeting on 25th May 2021 when it was decided to wind up the charity and ask Bishopstone Group Parish Council to hold their assets as a separate fund - the final figure of the NBCC account is £4,571.24. This letter is signed by all Trustees.

The letter outlines that the funds are only to be used for the purposes of charity i.e.

To provide, promote and facilitate educational, training and social activities for the residents of Bishopstone, Bridge Sollars, Byford, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage.

After discussion, the above proposal was unanimously agreed and the Clerk will now open a separate account with Nat West Bank where these funds will be ring fenced. The existing signatories will remain but Cllr M Holmes will be added as additional signatory.

5. Chairman's report

5.1 The Kenchester Parish Councillor vacancy has now been advertised for the legal amount of time so the Parish Council are in a position to co-opt. The Parish Council were informed that there may be a prospective candidate in Kenchester who it is hoped will attend the next meeting in November.

5.2 As instructed at the last council meeting, I ordered the paint for Bishopstone kiosk and delivered it to Councillor Sarah Keefe. Work has now started and many thanks to Cllr Keefe and to Cllr Morgan.

5.3 Byford Common

Since the last meeting, a resident asked me to meet him on the Byford Common because he had serious concerns with regard the work carried out by Balfour Beatty. The resident showed me a bucket of broken glass and what appeared to be an asbestos sheet left in the new ditch. I reported the asbestos to Stuart Nowell at Balfour Beatty. This sheet was later confirmed as asbestos and was removed under the required health and safety regulations.

I contacted the Clerk and asked if she could find out the legal standing the Parish Council had with regard to Byford Common. The next day the Clerk reported that Byford Common is owned by Garnons Estate and therefore the Parish Council have no jurisdiction over the Common whatsoever.

On 19th August at the request of the Ward Councillor David Hitchiner, we met on the common to discuss the various concerns raised by the residents with regard to recent works carried out by Balfour Beatty. As a result, Ward Councillor Hitchiner has since been in correspondence directly with Balfour Beatty expressing his concerns and that of the residents with regard to the standard of work carried out on the Common.

The Parish Council had purchased two signs to replace those on the Common. However, in accordance with the information received with regard to ownership of the common and some disagreement with regard to the actual siting of these signs - it was thought to be in everyone's best interests if Garnons Estate now decide the siting of the signs. The Chairman will deliver the signs to the Estate Office with an explanation.

5.4 Ward Cllr Hitchiner also looked at the road at Byford Church where continuous running water has badly damaged the road surface, I asked if he could help sort out this longstanding issue with Balfour Beatty.

5.5 Councillor Sharon Knight, myself and the Ward Councillor met with Will Wilson Traffic Management at the Antiques Centre on the 27th July over the proposed Speed Limit through Bridge Sollars it was a positive meeting with a good outcome.

6. Byford Common:

6.1 Resignation of Byford Councillor –

It is with sadness the Chairman reported he had received the resignation of Sue Hubbard as a Parish Councillor. Cllr Hubbard has served the community for over 36 years and the Chairman expressed his personal thanks to her for all the work she has carried out for the Parishes over many years including preparing and submitting the very complex Neighbourhood Plan. These sentiments were totally supported by all those present.

Councillors signed a leaving card and it was agreed to give Cllr Hubbard a Oakchurch gift voucher. Cllr Holmes will organise and deliver.

Cllr Hubbard's resignation creates a vacancy for an interim Vice Chairman. In her absence, it was unanimously agreed to ask Cllr Handscomb if she would be prepared to cover this interim vacancy until the election in May 2022. The Clerk will liaise. Item to remain on the agenda.

6.2 Confirm Ownership – ownership confirmed as Garnons Estate

6.3 Parish Council involvement – no further involvement.

6.4 Future Signs – it was agreed to give the signs, recently purchased by the Parish Council, to the Estate Office.

6.5 Future maintenance – no future maintenance by the Parish Council – this will revert back to Garnons Estate.

7. The Parish Council's Health and Safety Policy – as previously, this will be reviewed and adopted together with other official papers at the Annual Parish Council Meeting held in May 2022.

8. Ward Councillor's report – the latest Leader's Report will be circulated later this month.

Ward Cllr Hitchiner reported that Hereford Council Chief Executive, Paul Walker is working towards total transparency within the Council and this is producing various anomalies along the way.

Catherine Knowles has been appointed interim Director of Children's Services.

The current figures have just been released for the Housing Land Supply in Herefordshire. For the first time since the Core Strategy was adopted - Herefordshire has a 5-year Housing Land Supply - better than that – it actually has a 6.9-year Herefordshire Land Supply.

This news comes as a huge relief to those who have been worried about the potential impact on Neighbourhood Plan policies where plans are over 2-years old.

There was discussion on the selling of the Town Hall; the current phosphate levels and its impact on future building/planning applications.

Ward Councillor Hitchiner confirmed he has been in contact with Balfour Beatty with regard to the ongoing issues on Byford Common and will continue to offer support to residents if needed.

9. Finance: Account sheet/schedule of payment sheet circulated.

(9.1) It was unanimously agreed to pay of outstanding invoices.

10. Highways and Environmental Matters:

(10.1) Footpath Officers' Reports – all in good order. BS2 needs strimming – Clerk to contact lengthsman.

(10.2) Bridleway – additional dog foul bin – after discussion it was agreed not to provide a dog foul bin at Green Lane at this time due to the difficulties with empty the bin etc. However, it was agreed to monitor the situation – if the situation does not improve then further thought should be given to providing a bin and its management.

(10.3) Speeding issues A438 - following a site visit – it has been agreed that a TRO be put forward to reduce the speed limit to 40mph with appropriate signage. An email outlining this proposal has been circulated and the Clerk will write on behalf of the Parish Council supporting these proposals. Individual residents to be encouraged to write in registering their support. Cllr Knights will copy and circulate the email outlining these proposals.

(10.4) Cllr Holmes reported that she had submitted a request for between 15 and 30 trees to include Silver Birch, Rowan and wild cherry. If successful, they will be delivered first fortnight of November, so perhaps item can be added to the November agenda for decisions on siting/ planting and celebration.

11. Open Session

It was brought to the Parish Council's attention that there could be more transparency within the various parishes on matters arising within the Parish Council.

This item was discussed at length including the decision – taken some years ago - to stop producing a Parish Newsletter. It was agreed that all Notice of Meetings would be displayed on Notice Boards and on the website. On the bottom of each agenda there would be a note inviting residents to contact the clerk if they wished to receive an email or paper copy of the minutes. It was acknowledged that not all residents have access to the internet so, where possible, paper copies of the Minutes will be displayed on Notice Boards.

It was reported that the Notice Board on Byford Common is a bit unsteady – Clerk to liaise with lengthsman. It was acknowledged that this type of feedback is invaluable to the Parish Council – and so often results in maintenance/repairs being carried out before major repairs/replacement become necessary.

12.Planning matters:

(12.1) Sollars View – Ward Cllr Hitchiner confirmed that he had been liaising with the Planning Officer and that any decision had been delayed. Hopefully there will be a revised submission which allows for a compromise with regard to the outer cladding of the building.

13. Cllr S Keefe gave a brief update on 'Making space for Nature in our Parish'

Three of the wildflower sites created - in Kenchester and Bishopstone - have been weeded and further plants added to create flowers for insects in the Spring and Autumn next year. Moving forward, the plan is to extend the sites and consolidate this year's work, and support Muriel Holmes in Byford. Request for help with the project, 2-3 times a year for a couple of hours. Sharon Knights volunteered to help, weekends.

14. Items for next agenda –

Date of next meeting will be on second Wednesday 10th November 2021 at 7.30p.m.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00 p.m.

Signed:

Date: