

**Batheaston Parish Council**

**Minutes of the Extra Meeting of the Batheaston Parish Council  
held in The Rhymes Pavilion on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> MAY 2018 at 7-15 pm**

**Present :-** Cllrs R Mimmack (VC), E Adams, P Burcombe, S Cast, D Craig, D Greener, J Jeffery, C McCarthy,  
D Redding and M Townley (Clerk)

**Attending:-** Ward Councillor and 2 x residents

*Penny Corley is in the RUH today undergoing an appendectomy. A bouquet will be delivered on her return home.*

**1 Public Participation –**

- 1.1 *P Fear* The River Footpath (BA 2/5) has now been repaired and the Path re-opened.  
Proposed to complete a photographic survey of the entire Footpath and this Report will be forwarded by the BPC to establish a renovations programme with B&NES.
- 1.2 *Cllr Veal* As all B&NES Departments have little monies then the above Report – to be forwarded to Mark Shelford - will highlight requirements for budgeting.

**2 Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs N Clutterbuck, S Hagen

**3 Declarations of Interest**

3.1 None at this time.

**4 Announcement of the Resignation of Chairman George Riley**

- 4.1 It is with regret that this resignation has to be recorded.  
A "Vote-of-Thanks" for his many years of service as Councillor and the last 3 years as Chairman was agreed.
- 4.2 RM made a statement of how this Council has progressed so harmoniously, and achieved much, and recent problems are resolvable if Councillors pull together again.  
A full copy of this Statement is attached.

**5 Election of Chairman**

- 5.1 The 4 x Councillor vacancies have been advertised and the Electoral Officer should be advising – before 12<sup>th</sup> June - whether 10 x electors wish for an election.  
If there is no request for an election then the Council should be given permission to "co-opt".
- 5.2 As there will soon be an influx of new councillors RM proposed to take on the role of Acting Chairman in this interim.
- 5.3 The Meeting accepted this proposal so the need for an election at this time not necessary.

**8 To rename the "Policy & Review Committee" as "Review & Policy Committee" (RPC)**

Proposed	R Mimmack	}	RESOLVED -	That this 're-ordering' of title is accepted.
Seconded	D Greener	}	(Unanimous)	

**9 To review and amend the wording of standing Order 20**

Proposed	R Mimmack	}	RESOLVED -	That the Standing Orders incorporates only the first option of paragraph
Seconded	E Adams	}	(Unanimous)	

**10 Adoption of revised Financial Control Procedures**

10.1 Copy of these control Procedures is issued and copy attached to these Minutes

Proposed	J Jeffery	}	RESOLVED -	That these Procedures be adopted as issued.
Seconded	P Burcombe	}	(Unanimous)	

10.2 3 x cheques were recorded and signed at this Meeting, and the signatories will be initialled on the cheque stubs.

**11 Chairman's Report**

11.1 Nothing to add at this time

**12 Clerk's Report**

- 12.1 A reminder that the next B&NES/ALCA Liaison Meeting is tomorrow Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May in Keynsham.  
Will be attended by RM.
- 12.2 Confirmation that until April this year that all Chairmen were understood to be responsible for the Minutes – and signed them off.
- 12.3 Confirmation that all Standing Committees "speak" for the Council – e.g. Planning Recommendations by the PRC are from the Council.
- 12.4 Confirmation that the BLA still exists as a separate entity – with charitable status.
- 12.5 Accepting advice the Clerk noted that it was time for change so tendered his resignation until a new Clerk is appointed and trained. The Chairman note Mike Townley's long and devoted service to this Parish Council. This will be properly recognised on a suitable occasion in the future.

**13 Date of next Meeting**

Set for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 7-15pm

Chairman..... Date.....

## Chairman's Remarks 29th May 2018

What a turnaround from May 2015 when a group of largely new councillors won the first contested election in this Parish for years and set about running the Council in an entirely different way from its predecessor - in consultation with local residents rather than ignoring them completely as had happened in the past. At that time there was a real buzz in the room as we set about a series of projects and actions:

- the CAT and our plans for improvements to the Riverside including the former toilet block
- the Secret Garden,
- the management of the car park,
- support for the Save the Meadows campaign,
- highways projects such as the Stambridge and Bannerdown Road pavements, even the High Street speed bump
- village gateway signs,
- the flower poles,
- the Rock & Rolls parties,
- the Neighbourhood Plan,
- improved relations with B&NES highways staff and much more.

Look at us now, 3 years later. We've achieved nearly all of the above but we now have

- open hostility between councillors,
- formal complaints to B&NES by councillors against colleagues,
- 4 good people resigned including now the Chair of the council too,
- the ALCA Secretary coming to our meetings to tell us how to run them.
- and yesterday I learned from BREDAC that the village party has been cancelled with no discussion at Council and on less than 2 weeks' notice

We are a public body funded by the taxpayer with strict rules of conduct and administration intended to protect ourselves and the public. What has gone wrong? Frankly it is a toxic combination of ignorance and disregard of the rules, combined with personal animosity and disrespect displayed by councillors towards their colleagues.

This is the third BPC meeting in a row which has begun with a homily. And from a different person each time. When I agreed reluctantly at the last meeting (only 2 weeks ago) to support George as his Vice-Chair it was on the understanding that I would work with him to rebuild confidence, repair the damage of the last few months and leave the council in good shape for others to take over in May next year.

George has now gone and we're in the last chance saloon. The solution is either fairly simple or completely beyond us. The easy part is getting our procedures in order. We then have to regularise actions which are now known to have been incorrect - also fairly straightforward. The hard part, which has to be achieved first, is to rebuild respect between colleagues. That requires humility and courage on behalf of people who need to look at themselves and decide how to deal with it. It may mean the resignations haven't finished yet. In my view those who have caused offence must resign or apologise; apologies must be accepted and formal complaints must be withdrawn.

I am prepared to lead this process but only if everyone is prepared to support me in resolving the problems even if they don't always agree with me. Otherwise it won't be too long before B&NES have to step in and take control of the Council. That would almost certainly be an ignominious first. Are we really that bad? I like to think not.

I'm prepared to speak to any of you individually or collectively but it's got to be done soon