

## **Batheaston Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Batheaston Parish Council held at 7:15pm on Tuesday 16th June 2020**

**Present: Councillors Patrick Vandestein (Chairman), Derek Greener, Catherine Gregory, James Jeffrey, Andrew Jeffryes, Catherine McCarthy, Alexis Pavlou (from Item 6), Hannah Squire.**

In attendance: Richard Maccabee (Clerk).

#### **1. Public Participation.**

**1.1.** Mr Peter Fear and Mr Jeremy Webb attended on behalf of the Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH) Trust, and Mr Webb indicated that the project is progressing well: they have agreed the lease agreement to allow building to commence; and the project is structured in two Stages to address the possibility of not securing necessary funds. They have instructed Sage Developments to commence building work in July.

**2. Councillors Paula Day and Matt Tovey submitted apologies.** It was also noted that the Ward Councillors were unable to attend, as there was a BANES Council meeting at the same time.

**3.** There were no **declarations of interest.**

**4. The minutes of the meeting of Council** held on the meeting of Council held on 12th May were approved.

**5. The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council** held on 22nd May 2020 were approved. Cllr Greener asked that it be noted that he supported the decision to confirm the Clerk in post, but had abstained because of his concerns about the procedure

#### **6. Planning**

**6.1.** Council reviewed the following planning application from Bath and North East Somerset Council:

Application Type: Full Application

Site Location: Mulsanne House 246A High Street Batheaston BA1 7RA

Description of Proposal: Conversion of an existing two storey garage to a separate dwelling

Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Andrew Haines

Reference Number: 20/01605/FUL

Case Officer: Dominic Battrick

Councillors noted that the application will result in the loss of car parking space and a larger living space, potentially exacerbating existing parking problems. They also noted that the development does not contribute to improving housing provision for the local community; it is intended as a holiday let.

On that basis **Council resolved to object** to the proposal.

**Clerk**

Application Type: Full Application  
Site Location: 12A Elmhurst Estate Batheaston BA1 7NR  
Description of Proposal: Insertion of rooflights into roofslopes, alterations to window configuration to south gable and erection of small motorcycle shed in front garden  
Name of Applicant: Mark and Isobel Russell  
Reference Number: 20/01663/FUL Case Officer: Danielle Milsom

**Council resolved not to object** to the proposal.

**Clerk**

Application Type: Tree Works subject to TPO  
Site Location: Little Court Bannerdown Road Batheaston BA1 7NE  
Description of Proposal: Sycamore (T4)-Remove all branches below first fork and saplings. (Causes shade, blocks sun and heat)  
Name of Applicant: Ms Jane Gifford  
Reference Number: 20/01949/TPO Case Officer: Jane Brewer

**Council resolved not to object** to the proposal.

**Clerk**

**6.2. Council reviewed** the Appeal that has been made to the Planning Inspectorate in respect of:

Planning Application 18/03934/FUL, dated 28 August 2018  
Site Location: Barn Bailbrook Lane Lower Swainswick  
Description of Proposal: Prior approval request for a change of use from office (Use Class B1a) to dwelling (Use Class C3).  
Appeal Ref: 20/00022/RFAGR  
Application Ref: 19/03218/ODCOU Planning Inspectorate Appeal Ref: 3248638  
Appeal Start Date: 22 May 2020  
Appellant: Mr Andrew Mercer

**Comments resolved to object** to this Planning Application.

**Clerk**

**6.3. Council noted** the following decisions on planning applications have been notified by Bath and North East Somerset Council since the March Council Meeting:

Application Type: Full Application  
Site Location: Old House Northend Batheaston  
Description of Proposal: Erection of a parking area gate mechanism, boundary pier and replacement walling. (Retrospective)  
Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Humphrey  
Application Number: 19/05507/FUL Case Officer: Helen Ellison  
Decision: REFUSE.

Application Type: Listed Building Consent (Alts/exts)  
Site Location: Old House Northend Batheaston  
Description of Proposal: External alterations for the erection of a parking area gate mechanism, boundary pier and replacement walling. (Regularisation)  
Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Humphrey  
Application Number: 19/05508/LBA Case Officer: Helen Ellison  
Decision: REFUSE.

Application Type: Full Application  
Site Location: 64 Catherine Way Batheaston BA1 7NY  
Description of Proposal: Erection of a replacement two storey extension and dormer window following demolition of existing structure  
Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Coombe  
Application Number: 20/00893/FUL Case Officer: Dominic Battrick  
Decision: PERMIT.

6.3.1. **Council noted** that in all of the above cases, Council had not objected to these applications, and in the first two cases BANES had taken a different view. Cllr Vandesteen indicated that Council will seek to learn from such differences in judgment.

**6.4. Council noted** the outcome of the Appeal to the Secretary of State to relating to Planning Application 18/03934/FUL, dated 28 August 2018, for 47 Bailbrook Lane, Lower Swainswick, Bath BA1 7AL was refused.

**7. Council noted** that Cllr Vandesteen and Tovey had conducted the review of the Clerk's probation and offered the position on a permanent basis and that the Clerk had accepted the offer.

## **8. Governance Matters**

**8.1. Council noted** a paper from Cllr Vandesteen which reaffirms the core purpose of the Council: to make Batheaston a great place to live, work and visit, and sustain all that into the future

**8.2. Council resolved** to dissolve the Working Groups and Committees that have not met regularly, have no documented and agreed terms, and/or are no longer quorate. This resulted in dissolution of all Working Groups and Committees except the Finance Committee.

### **8.3. New Committee and Working Group structure and membership**

8.3.1. **An amendment was moved** to item 8.3, to "resolve that all Councillors are invited to join a WG for the next 6 weeks to develop plans for a new Committee and Working Group structure and membership, and if possible bring forward proposals for approval at the July meeting of the Council."

8.3.2. **Council approved** the amendment.

8.3.3. **Council approved** the amended motion.

- 8.4. Cllr Vandsteen introduced a new Policy for the process of Co-option of Councillors. He indicated that there was a lack of clarity in the existing policy. In the presented Paper he had identified the minimum standard policy amongst Parish Councils, and those items that are at the discretion of Council on which he would seek positive confirmation from Council.
- 8.5. Councillors commented that there were some issues with the Policy as presented. Nevertheless it was agreed to consider it, as this represents a step forward, and can be further refined and improved.
- 8.6. Councillors considered the discretionary elements of the Policy. An amendment was proposed to Clause 5, to replace the word “all” with “the”, in “... on all communications channels commonly used by the community”.
  - 8.6.1. Council approved the amendment.
- 8.7. **Council approved** the amended Policy.
- 8.8. **Council resolved** that the Clerk would publicise the approved Council Co-option Process and invite candidates for co-option in channels used by residents for a co-option meeting to be held at the July BPC meeting.

**Clerk**

## 9. Finance

- 9.1. **Council noted** the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020.
- 9.2. **Council received** a report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Cllr Gregory. She highlighted:
  - 9.2.1. her focus and that of the Clerk has been on preparation for the annual audit, concluding the Year-End Accounts and reviewing the policy and valuation of fixed assets.
  - 9.2.2. She noted that there were outstanding actions from the previous Audit, including that all Councillors should use Council email addresses.
  - 9.2.3. She commented that the Financial Regulations should be reviewed and that she is proposing to bring this forward to the July meeting.
  - 9.2.4. She noted that there is a significant financial risk: the council is able to draw down £18,000 of Section 106 funding for Play Facilities, but that the project needs to be completed by January 2022, and therefore the project needs to be defined and progressed as soon as possible.
  - 9.2.5. Councillor Vandsteen is progressing the Public Works Loan application and will bring that forward to Council in the near future.
  - 9.2.6. The Finance Committee had discussed options to the use the Rhymes Pavilion to support the local community as it emerges from Lockdown. One proposal is to offer it to the Primary School as an additional classroom, to allow for greater social distancing when the School re-opens. This is being pursued by Cllr Pavlou.
- 9.3. **Council approved** the Grant Application Form and Policy. Councillors noted the desire to provide greater transparency on how decisions to award grants are made.

**9.4. Council considered** a Grant Application from the Friends of Batheaston School application for £1,000 to restore access to the pond in the school grounds.

9.4.1. It was noted that the project is not due to be undertaken until Summer 2021, and that therefore the funds are not needed now. It was also noted that if funds are not needed before March 2021, then the application cannot be considered until April 2021: Council cannot commit funding for future financial years.

9.4.2. In respect of the current application, Councillors were keen to have more information on:

- the ownership of the land, and any issues, constraints relating to this in leases, covenants, etc.;
- any plans to benefit the wider Village community;
- the safety measures of the pond, for schoolchildren and others.

9.4.3. Given that funds are not needed now, **Council rejected the application** but indicated that they would welcome a re-submission, addressing the points above, when the project is closer to commencing. Cllr Pavlou was asked to feed this back to the Friends of Batheaston School.

**Cllr Pavlou**

**9.5. Council approved** a Grant Application from Friends of Bathampton Meadow application for £435 as a contribution to cutting the grass on Batheaston Meadows.

#### **9.6. Fixed Assets Register Policy**

9.6.1. Cllr Gregory introduced this item. Council does not have a policy for the valuation and management of fixed assets, and this had led to some inconsistency and confusion.

9.6.2. She had reviewed a number of other Councils' policies, as well as the model policy from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), to develop the policy she presented.

9.6.3. She noted that this will be a living document; it will be updated and improved as a result of its exercise.

9.6.4. **Council approved the policy.**

**9.7. Council noted** that the Clerk had not been able to complete the Annual Statement of Accounts for the meeting but would do so for the imminent Finance Committee.

**Clerk**

**9.8. Council noted** that the Clerk had not been able to complete the Monthly Transactions for the meeting but would do so for the imminent Finance Committee.

**Clerk**

**9.9. Council approved** an amendment to motion 9.8 to delegate the approval of 2 months' transactions Finance Committee

9.9.1. **Council approved** the application for Batheaston.gov.uk domain for a cost of £109 plus VAT for the first 2 years

9.9.2. **Council approved** the proposal to move to Microsoft 365 for email, document management, calendar, and other administrative functions.

- The Clerk noted that this would allow the Council to fulfil the obligation of using Council email addresses.
- It was noted that this proposal will be assigned to the Communications budget, which is justified as email is a fundamental building block for improved communication.

**9.10. Council received** a report from Cllr McCarthy on behalf of the Highways Working Group.

9.10.1. The extent to which the Parish is dependent on BANES was highlighted, and the need therefore for the Parish Council to exert its influence most effectively to ensure that BANES deliver for the community.

## **10. BANES' Local Plan Partial Update and Nomination of Sites**

**10.1.** An amendment was moved to delegate this to the Clerk, assisted by a group of Councillors to complete the submission on behalf of the Council, by the deadline on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June.

**10.2. Councillor approved** the amendment.

**10.3.** Councillors Jeffryes, McCarthy, Pavlou, and Vandesteen volunteered to assist the Clerk.

**Clerk**

## **11. Clerk's Report**

**11.1. Council noted** a report from the Clerk, including update on preparation for the Internal Audit.

**11.2. Council resolved** to extend the delegated authority to the Clerk for a further period, until the July meeting.

## **12. Chairman's Report**

**12.1.** Cllr Vandesteen thanked Councillors for working with him. He reiterated that his ambition is to look to the best councils for examples of practice. In that light, Frome Town Council is perhaps the best, and has published a number of books which outline their approach to "Flatpack Democracy"

**12.2.** He also indicated that he hoped in future to have draft Agenda and Papers to be published a fortnight before meeting, to allow for a higher quality of preparation and debate at the meetings.

**The meeting closed at 9:15pm**

### **Forthcoming Meetings**

Parish Council Meeting, 7:15pm on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020  
Parish Council Meeting, 7:15pm on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Parish Council Meetings are open meetings; members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak by invitation.

Signed: -  Parish Clerk Date 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020