Batheaston Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Batheaston Parish Council held at 7:15pm on Tuesday 17th January 2023, at the Rhymes Pavilion. Present: Councillors Peter Bryant, Catherine McCarthy, Wesley Hallam, Peter Lewis, Alexis Pavlou, Sue Peachey and Kate Skelton.

In Cllr Squire's absence, Cllr Pavlou (Vice Chair of Council) chaired the meeting.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1. **There was no public participation.**

2. **Council accepted** apologies for absence from Cllr Hannah Squire

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

4. **Minutes of Previous Meetings**

   4.1. **Council approved** the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 15th November 2022.

VILLAGE MATTERS

5. **Playground**

   Items 5.1 to 5.3, regarding the Batheaston Leisure Association, were deferred as new information had been received shortly before the meeting.

   5.4. **Council received** an update on the progress of the next phase of the project, including the priorities highlighted in the recent External Inspection.

   5.4.1. The Clerk commented that he had shown a third contractor around the site that morning, and hoped to receive a quote from him soon, which would allow him to bring quotes forward for approval by Council.

   5.4.2. He has asked for quotes to repair only the damaged part of the fence, or to replace the whole of the top boundary. Council will be able to decide which option to take.

6. **Car Park**

   6.1. **Council reviewed** a summary of the feedback from residents and local businesses regarding the imposition of a limit to parking.

   6.1.1. The Clerk commented that he had two written complaints, with others making similar points by phone.

   6.1.2. The first of these complaints was from a representative of a business located on the High Street. They argued for some dispensation, or perhaps permit scheme to be granted to businesses.

   6.1.3. The second was from a nearby resident, who felt that the Council was favouring dog and other walkers, and those using it as a park and ride.

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6.1.4. In response, Councillors noted that their primary motivation had been to support local businesses, by making it easier for their customers to park, and residents of the parish wishing to visit the shops and amenities in the centre of the village.

6.1.5. They noted that there is a car park nearby, which allows for longer periods of parking, albeit levying a charge.

6.1.6. The car park is too small to allow permits to be granted.

6.1.7. For residents, the period of operation, from 8am-6pm, allows for a generous period of overnight parking.

7. Highways

7.1. Council received an update on Highways matters from Cllr McCarthy.

7.1.1. She noted that there had been some discussion about introducing double yellow lines around the junction of Seven Acres Lane and Prospect Gardens, but no decision has been taken.

7.1.2. As noted before she will plan the monitoring of speeding on the High Street and Northend when the weather improves.

7.1.3. In response to a query, the Clerk advised that any concerns about cleaning of gullies are best reported to BANES by using Fix My Street (https://fix.bathnes.gov.uk/). He can then escalate matters if the response is not acceptable.

8. Riverside

8.1. Council received an update on recent activity of the Working Group from Cllr Lewis.

8.1.1. He regretted that the "apple tree climbing frame" had had to be removed as it was becoming dangerous. A new apple tree – an "eater" – will be planted in its place when the weather is conducive.

8.1.2. He reported that the Council had allowed a team from "BBC Winterwatch" to film on the riverbank (they also filmed on the adjacent plot of land, behind the car lot). This is expected to be aired in the current series, and will be publicised.

8.1.3. He noted that there are a considerable number of maintenance tasks, which the Clerk is working through.

8.1.4. Following the recent flood in the car park, he will look at ways to remove the mud and silt which has been deposited on the car park.

8.1.5. It was noted that the "limestone link" footpath (from the Riverside Park westwards along the river) has deteriorated further, and is becoming dangerous. The Council is liaising with officers at BANES.

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8.2. **Council noted** that the Working Group is considering seeking Bathing Water Designation from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

8.2.1. Cllr Lewis explained that he has been liaising with Surfers Against Sewage", to counter the problem of sewage discharge, and to prepare the case for achieving this designation.

8.2.2. Councillors welcomed this initiative.

8.3. **Council received** a report on Wessex Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 and **Council approved** a submission to the public consultation on behalf of the Council.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

9. Audit Action Plan

9.1. **Council deferred** the review of progress.

FINANCE MATTERS

10. Budget

10.1. **Council received** an update from the Clerk on the financial position at the end of December and a forecast of the year-end position.

10.1.1. The Clerk commented that the spreadsheet previously circulated indicated that the Council will not cover its costs this year, and will end the year with funds of approximately £13,000 (not including the ring-fenced playground reserve, of approx.. £5,600). This is substantially below the target agreed by Council at its September, of half of the annual Precept, which would be £27,700.

Council deferred items 10.2 and 10.3 relating to the budget and precept for next year, to allow for consideration of more ambitious plans. There will be an Emergency Meeting of the Council, to allow the Precept to be submitted to Bath and North East Somerset by its deadline of 8th February.

Clerk

11. Grant Application

11.1. **Council considered** an application for a grant from Batheaston Youth Club.

11.1.1. Councillors had a number of concerns about awarding this grant. First and foremost, the foregoing information regarding its own financial position.

11.1.2. There were also questions about the financial position of the Youth Club, which has quite substantial reserves.

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11.1.3. **Council deferred** the item, with a view to inviting representatives of the Youth Club to attend a future meeting. Cllr Pavlou undertook to write to them to set out some of the questions that would be explored.

Cllr Pavlou

11.2. **Council considered** a request for a contribution of up to £1,000 to the installation of a defibrillator at the Village Hall.

11.2.1. Councillors were unclear about the background of this, and deferred the item, and will request more information.

Clerk

12. Electricity supply contracts

12.1. **Council received** a report from the Clerk regarding the re-procurement of contracts for electricity supply for the Rhymes Pavilion, Streetlights and Floodlights.

12.1.1. He commented that he has been seeking to re-procure contracts since March 2022, but this has proved impossible given the volatility of the market, and the extremely high prices quoted.

12.1.2. This had meant that current contracts ended, leaving the Council on standard tariffs (since the start of this month). He now has much more attractive prices, which will result in a considerable saving.

12.2. **Council authorised** the Clerk to proceed to let contracts for these supplies, based on these quotations, so long as in each case the estimated annual cost has not changed by more than 10%.

13. Financial Administration

13.1. **Council approved** the record of transactions in the months since 27th September and for the Chair of the meeting to authorise the Bank Reconciliations of these months.

STANDING ITEMS AND REPORTS

14. Planning Applications

14.1. **Council reviewed** the following planning applications from Bath and North East Somerset Council and **decided not to oppose** them.

14.1.1. Reference Number: 22/04924/LBA
Application Type: Listed Building Consent (Alts/exts)
Site Location: Pine Cottage 44 Northend Batheaston BA1 7ES
Description of Proposal: External alterations for the repair works to coping stones at 44 and 46 Northend.

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14.1.2. Reference Number: 22/05110/FUL
Application Type: Full Application
Site Location: Charmydown Farm House Charmydown Lane Swainswick BA1 8AB
Description of Proposal: Installation of domestic ground mounted solar array, to include provision of associated infrastructure and landscaping.

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

14.2.1. Application Number: 22/03123/FUL Decision: PERMIT

14.2.2. Application Number: 22/03919/LBA Decision: REFUSE

14.2.3. Application Number: 22/03918/FUL Decision: REFUSE

14.2.4. Application Number: 22/04025/FUL Decision: PERMIT

14.2.5. Application Number: 22/03583/FUL Decision: PERMIT

14.2.6. Application Number: 22/02475/FUL Decision: WITHDRAWN

14.3. **Council noted** that these decisions align with the recommendation of the Parish Council, except in the cases of 22/03918/FUL and 22/03919/LBA, which the Council voted not to oppose.

15. Clerk's Report

15.1. **Council received** a report from the Clerk.

15.1.1. Council approved a sum of £250 to commission a full survey of the trees for which the Parish Council has responsibility, to identify any risks, and recommend appropriate maintenance works.

15.1.2. Council noted discussions with other parties about providing a "warm space".

16. Chairman's Report

16.1. **Cllr Pavlou** thanked Councillors for their attendance.

The Meeting closed at 9:21pm

Forthcoming Meetings:

Council Meeting, 21st February 2023

Council meetings are open to the public, and members of the public are welcome to join and may speak by invitation

Signed by Cllr Hannah Squire, Chair of Council:

Date:

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