

Batheaston Parish Council

Minutes of the Emergency Meeting of the Council at 7:15pm on Tuesday 12th May 2020

Present: Councillor James Jeffrey (Chairman), Derek Greener (Vice Chairman), Catherine Gregory, Andrew Jeffryes, Catherine McCarthy, Alexis Pavlou, Matt Tovey, Patrick Vandesteen.

In attendance: Richard Maccabee (Clerk).

1. Election of the Chairman.

- 1.1. Some concerns were raised about the process by which the election to this post was presented on the agenda.
- 1.2. Cllr Vandesteen indicated that he wished to be considered for the role. There were no other candidates.
- 1.3. **Council approved** Cllr Vandesteen as the new Chairman.
- 1.4. The Clerk indicated that it was acceptable for the Chairman to sign the Declaration of Acceptance within 14 days after the meeting. Cllr Vandesteen chaired the meeting from this point onwards.
- 1.5. Cllr Vandesteen took the chair from this point onwards.

2. Election of the Vice Chairman.

- 2.1. Cllr Tovey indicated that he wished to be considered for the role. There were no other candidates.
- 2.2. Council approved Cllr Tovey as the new Vice Chairman.

3. Public Participation.

- 3.1. A member of the public, representing Friends of Bathampton Meadows Riverside, asked whether there would be a possibility of funding to contribute to the grass-cutting. He was invited to apply for grant funding for consideration at the June Council meeting.
- 3.2. A member of the public asked about the process co-option onto the Council and when an opportunity would next arise. The Chairman asked that the Clerk publish information on the website, and more widely.

Clerk

4. There were no apologies for absence.

5. Declarations of interest

- 5.1. Councillor McCarthy declared an interest as she is a trustee of the Batheaston New Village Hall.

6. The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 21st April 2020 were approved

7. The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Council held on 5th May 2020 were approved.

8. Planning

- 8.1. Council reviewed the following planning application from Bath and North East Somerset Council:

Application Type: Full Application
Site Location: 10 Eagle Park Batheaston Bath BA1 7HS
Description of Proposal: Construction of rear extension and side extension including internal alterations. Widening of driveway and ground works to improve access to garden
Name of Applicant: Mrs and Mr Laura and David Hobbs Wall
Reference Number: 20/01533/FUL Case Officer: Danielle Milsom

Council resolved not to object.

Clerk

- 8.2. To note** the following decisions on planning applications have been notified by Bath and North East Somerset Council since the March Council Meeting:

Application Number: 20/00199/LBA
Application Type: Listed Building Consent (Alts/exts)
Site Location: 278 High Street Batheaston Bath BA1 7RA
Description of Proposal: Internal and external work to facilitate the erection of single storey rear extension to replace existing and removal of pergola.
Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Laville
Case Officer: Caroline Waldron
Decision: CONSENT

Application Number: 20/00676/FUL
Application Type: Full Application
Site Location: 6 West View Road Batheaston Bath BA1 7PN
Description of Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension
Name of Applicant: Kelly Parfitt
Case Officer: Danielle Milsom
Decision: PERMIT

Application Number: 20/00867/FUL
Application Type: Full Application
Site Location: 14 Eagle Park Batheaston Bath BA1 7HS
Description of Proposal: Provision of raised decked patio.
Name of Applicant: Mr & Mrs Smart
Case Officer: Isabel Daone
Decision: PERMIT

- 8.3.** The Chairman suggested that the Council are reminded of the position that it took, to understand where the final decision differs, and what can be learned from such instances.

9. Finance Committee

9.1. Report from the Finance Committee,

- 9.2. Cllr Gregory presented a report of the meeting of** on 28th April 2020. (Cllr Gregory, A)

9.3. She indicated that the Clerk has not yet been able to complete the year-end accounts for 2019/20 nor the VAT reclaim, and that these are now urgent. The Internal Audit has been deferred to 23rd June.

9.3.1. Review of actions from last year's audit.

Clerk

9.3.2. There was discussion of the impact of Covid-19 on the finances of the Parish Council, and on the community. A suggestion was made that the Rhymes Pavilion could be offered to the Primary School, as an additional classroom.

Cllr Pavlou

9.3.3. Cllr Gregory indicated that the Finance Committee will be working on preparing a more meaningful presentation of the budget for this year, and for the next two years.

9.3.4. The Finance Committee had determined to add authorisation for Cllrs Gregory and Tovey to sign cheques and authorise online payments.

9.3.5. There will be meetings of the Finance Committee every quarter, with other meetings as required. These will be open, public meetings.

9.4. An update on an application for a Public Works Loan

9.4.1. Cllr Vandesteen described process for applying for borrowing approval for town/parish councils from the Secretary of State of the Department for Communities and Local Government. This is the first of the two-part process, the second being the calling the money as and when needed. For the former, we prepare the case: Formal resolution, Report and Budget Numbers, the second of these represents the bulk of the work, and he suggests that this is done in an iterative way with ALCA.

9.4.2. The funds are sought to secure the necessary services from experts to develop plans for the Green Corridor.

9.4.3. Finance Cttee will ensure appropriate oversight and approval.

9.4.4. There was strong agreement that it will be importance of consulting with the village community with various options, was emphasised.

9.4.5. **Council approved** the request that the Finance Committee prepare an application for borrowing approval of a public works loan as approved in the budget for approval at the next Council meeting.

Cllr Gregory

10. Batheaston Youth Club

10.1. Cllr Gregory indicated that she has been unable to find the necessary approval for the grants to the Youth Club for 2019/20, which – at £9,500 – is a substantial amount of money. It is clear that the Council has intended to make this contribution.

10.2. Council approved these payments and asked the Clerk to complete the outstanding payments due for 2019/20.

Clerk

11. Community Empowerment Fund

- 11.1. Council discussed the opportunity to bid for up to £2,000 from the “Ward Councillor Empowerment Fund” that Bath and North East Somerset Council have announced. Councillors were asked to ensure that volunteer and other organisations in the Village are aware of this opportunity.

12. Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH)

- 12.1. Cllr Vandesteen referred Council to the detailed discussion at its last meeting. He informed Council that BNVHT intends to start construction within the next 3 months.
- 12.2. Councillors raised some concerns about the project, relating to the access, travel, and parking requirements. There is also the need for Councillors to have sight of the business plan for the building before offering full support. Cllr Vandesteen reminded Council it was not within its gift to obstruct construction; BNVHT has all required permissions.
- 12.3. On that basis, **Council approved** an amendment to change the wording of motion 13.1 to “support the building of the Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH)” rather than “... the project of ...”
- 12.4. **Council approved the amended resolution** to support the building of the Batheaston New Village Hall (BNVH) as proposed by the trustees and seeks to support its successful completion.
- 12.5. **Council approved** an amendment to change the wording of the motion 13.2 to insert “subject to having seen the business plan”.
- 12.6. **Council approved the amended resolution** to provide all reasonable support via its corresponding working group to supporting the BNVH trustees in funding applications, subject to having seen the business plan.

13. Play Area Repairs

- 13.1. The Clerk introduced this item. He thanked Cllr Gregory for reviewing the recent inspection report of the Play Area, and identifying a set of tasks that our Handyman may be able to undertake. The funds are required to provide the necessary materials.
- 13.2. Council approved the expenditure of £200

Clerk

14. Business Systems and Website

- 14.1. Councillor Jeffryes introduced these two items referring to the Clerk’s report which indicates the significant benefit that he expects that he and the Council will gain from these items.
- 14.2. He described the legislation that imposes requirements on the Council in respect of the accessibility and transparency of its website. He gave an overview of the evaluation process that he has undertaken, including reference to other sites.
- 14.3. **Council approved** the recommendation to select Blue Level to develop the new website for £2,279 + VAT (which includes hosting the site for the first year).

Clerk

14.4. Councillor Jeffryes described the background to the proposal for a new business system, which will significantly improve the administration of finances and assets. Benefits include greater transparency and traceability of approval, planned maintenance.

14.5. Council approved the recommendation to purchase a new business software system from AvantEdge, for £1,422 + VAT (this price includes the hosting for the remainder of 2020/21).

Clerk

15. Clerk's Report

15.1. The clerk apologised for the very late distribution of this report.

15.2. Council approved the extension of delegation of powers to the Clerk for as long as the "lockdown" continues.

Clerk

16. Chairman's Report

16.1. Cllr Vandesteen thanked Councillors for appointing him to the post. He outlined his experience, and his intention to work with the Clerk ensure that Council meetings are focussed and well-prepared.

Meeting closed at 9:53.

Forthcoming Meetings

Parish Council Meeting, 7:15pm on Tuesday 16th June 2020 venue to be confirmed

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

Signed: -  Parish Clerk Date 10th June 2020