

## Batheaston Parish Council

### Minutes of the Meeting of Batheaston Parish Council held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Present:** Councillors Hannah Squire (Chairman), Dom Denny, Derek Greener, Andrew Lea, Tamsin May, Catherine McCarthy, Sue Peachey, Dawn Skarset, Patrick Vandesteene.

In attendance: Richard Maccabee (Clerk).

## PROCEDURAL MATTERS

### 1. Public participation regarding matters on the agenda.

#### 1.1. GrowBatheaston

- 1.1.1. Representatives of GrowBatheaston outlined their activities and plans in developing gardening, horticulture, food and related initiatives.
- 1.1.2. They are seeking to provide affordable food to local residents; reduce social isolation, and contribute to the cohesion of the local community.
- 1.1.3. One of the next initiatives is to investigate the possibility of establishing a Community Food Shop. They believe that the Riverside Toilet Block might be a suitable venue, as Leak is in Larkhall. They would like to discuss this with the Council.

#### 1.2. Cotswolds Wardens

- 1.2.1. A representative of the Cotswolds Wardens gave a presentation on their activities in the Parish and beyond in support of their application for a Grant (Item 7.4).
- 1.2.2. He described the work they do to maintain public rights of way, of which the Parish of Batheaston has over 23 kilometres (14 miles). This includes clearing overgrown vegetation, repairing walls and liaising with landlords, to ensure that they can be enjoyed by walkers.
- 1.2.3. They also provide Guided Walks and Educational Visits, and attend Town & Village Shows and Fêtes.

### 2. Apologies for absence

were accepted from Cllrs Tina Connor, Alison James, James Jeffery, and Tamsin May.

- 2.1. It was noted that Cllr Matt Tovey has resigned from the Council.

### 3. Declarations of interest

were declared by Councillor McCarthy in respect of the Planning Application concerning the New Village Hall of which she is a Trustee (8.1.2).

### 4. Minutes of previous meetings

- 4.1. **Council approved** the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020

- 4.2.** **Council approved** the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.
- 4.3.** **Council approved** the minutes of the Co-option meeting of Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- 4.4.** **The Clerk** apologised that he had not been able to submit the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020, and will do so as soon as possible.

**Clerk**

## **VILLAGE MATTERS**

### **5. Council Precept for 2021/22**

- 5.1.** Cllr Vandesteen explained that the Council is obliged to set its Precept – the income to be collected in Council Tax – by 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021. This is thus the final scheduled meeting at which the matter can be decided.
  - 5.1.1.** He presented a report following a discussion at the Finance Committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
  - 5.1.2.** He commented that the “tax base” – the number of households which will contribute to paying the Precept – has reduced very slightly from the current year, and there is therefore a slight increase in the cost to residents. The figures presented take account of this; to consider the amount residents will pay.
  - 5.1.3.** He described the structure of the budget, noting that the majority of the spend, approximately £45,000 is spent on mandatory items, a further £20,000 is discretionary, of which approximately half is given in grants to Community Groups.
- 5.2.** He described three options for the Precept that had been discussed by the Finance Committee.
  - 5.2.1.** Option 1 is a “no change” choice, £50,250.
  - 5.2.2.** Option 2 is a reduction of the precept to £46,700
  - 5.2.3.** Option 3 is an increase of the precept of 5%, to £52,770
- 5.3. Members of the Finance Committee noted the following points:**
  - 5.3.1.** Coronavirus has had, and will continue to have, significant financial impact on many residents on the Parish, and the Council should recognise this by minimising any increase in payment required of them.
  - 5.3.2.** There is however increasing need for local Councils to provide and co-ordinate services, and this is an explicit part of the Central Government’s strategy for response to the challenges of Coronavirus.
  - 5.3.3.** The Council has not delivered improvements during the current year and should consider cutting the Precept.

- 5.4.** In further discussion, Councillors noted that there will be increased need within the community. It will however be important that the Council deliver value for money.
- 5.5.** **Council approved** a Precept of £52,770 for 2021/22. The Clerk will submit this figure to Bath and North East Somerset Council.

**Clerk**

## **6. Riverside Car Park**

- 6.1.** **Council approved** a motion to defer the items relating to the proposal to establish a Working Group to progress the management of the Riverside Car Park.

## **COUNCIL MATTERS**

### **7. Finance Committee (Cllr Vandesteene)**

- 7.1.** **Council received** a report from the Chair of the Finance Committee following its meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- 7.2.** **The Clerk apologised** that he had not provided the draft minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee following its meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- 7.3.** **Council received** a report of monthly transactions October, November and December 2020, and bank reconciliation.
- 7.4.** **Council discussed** the Grant to Cotswolds Wardens, which had previously been discussed by the Finance Committee at which it was not approved.
  - 7.4.1. Cllr McCarthy spoke strongly in favour of the grant, highlighting the extensive and valuable work that the volunteers of Cotswold Wardens do in maintaining footpaths and the natural environment in the Parish.
  - 7.4.2. Members of the Finance Committee reiterated the discussion at the Committee meeting. There were concerns that the funds are not needed; that any shortfall will be made up by others.
  - 7.4.3. On the other hand, the award of the grant would be an important part of the relationship with the organisation, and recognition of its importance to the community.
  - 7.4.4. **Council approved** a motion to defere the motion to the next Council meeting.

## **STANDING ITEMS AND REPORTS**

### **8. Planning Applications**

- 8.1.** **Council reviewed** the following planning application from Bath and North East Somerset Council.
  - 8.1.1.** **Council resolved not to oppose** the following applications:
    - 8.1.1.1.** Application Reference: [20/04604/LBA](#)

**8.1.1.2.** Application Reference: [20/04703/VAR](#)

**8.1.1.3.** Application Reference: [20/04834/TCA](#)

**8.1.1.4.** Application Reference: [20/04858/FUL](#)

**8.1.1.5.** Application Reference: [20/04959/FUL](#)

**8.1.1.6.** Application Reference: [21/00026/TCA](#)

**8.1.1.7.** Application Reference: [21/00110/FUL](#)

**8.1.2.** Application References: [21/00089/AGRN](#) and [21/00090/AGRN](#) were considered together as they refer to the same property:

Council considered these applications, and did not feel able to submit a comment on the applications at this point.

Councillors noted that – in response to a previous Planning Application 20/01255/D6A – it had previously requested a “master plan which consolidates all … changes and sets out the future intentions as compared to the original plans and undertakings”. It reiterates this request, and noted that the applicant indicated in our meeting that he would be open to developing such a plan.

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

8.2.1. 20/03136/VAR – REFUSE

8.2.2. 20/03618/FUL – PERMIT

8.2.3. 20/03657/FUL – PERMIT

8.2.4. 20/03658/LBA – CONSENT

8.2.5. 20/04023/FUL – Application Permitted

8.2.6. 20/04024/LBA – CONSENT

8.2.7. 20/04278/FUL – Decision: Permit

8.2.8. 20/04320/TCA – No Objection

8.2.9. 20/04321/FUL – PERMIT

8.2.10. 20/04506/VAR – Planning permission not required

8.2.11. 20/04544/VAR – REFUSE

## **9. Clerk's report.**

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

**9.1.1.** **Council noted** the discussions with GrowBathaston relating to the “Community Shop” initiative.

9.1.2. The Clerk reminded Councillors that Grow Batheaston had previously offered to plant 500 trees on public land, and asked if the Council has a suitable location.

9.1.3. Cllrs Lea and Squire will pursue this matter with Grow Batheaston.

**Cllr Lea / Cllr Squire**

**9.1.4.** He invited Cllr Peachey to introduce the item relating to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill. She undertook to circulate briefing papers to Councillors. She

**Cllr Peachey**

9.1.5. Cllr Greener reported from his meeting with representatives of GrowBatheaston about their Community Store. He commended the progress they had made a few months, and their energy and enthusiasm. He suggested that it might be appropriate for the Council to nominate a Councillor to act as a liaison point.

**10. Chairman's report.**

**10.1.** Cllr Squire welcomed Cllr Denny and Squire.

**10.2.** She went on to discuss the leak of confidential information share with Council in a closed session of the November Council meeting.

**10.3.** She said that the action of sharing this information was at best irresponsible and at worst reprehensible. It has brought the council into disrepute. One of those third parties is a key partner in the village and by disclosing that informal it has caused damage to the reputation of the council. There has been real harm done as a result of this disclosure.

**10.4.** She indicated that actions will need to be considered at a future meeting.

**10.5.** Cllr Vandesteen offered to provide some background documents relating to major projects and developments in the past.

**The meeting closed at 9:35pm**

**Forthcoming Meetings**

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

Signed: -



Parish Clerk

Date 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021