

MINUTES OF THE BERE REGIS PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 13th MARCH 2014 AT THE DRAX HALL, NORTH STREET, BERE REGIS, COMMENCING 7PM.

Present: Cllrs R Pitcher C Maunder S Munnings A Duncanson
 L Alderman B House M Howard L Fairhurst
 T Maunder

Chair: Cllr I Ventham

Clerk: Mrs A Crocker

In attendance: 2 members of the public.

13.173 Public Participation

13.173.1 Drain clearing – After the recent extreme weather, many of the drains are full of leaves and need to be cleared. Cllr Ventham felt that Highways would have a schedule of works in place and the village drains will be cleared in due course.

13.173.2 Back Lane - It was reported that the bushes along Back Lane need clearing. The Lengthsman had been working in this area recently but the Clerk will ask him to revisit the site.

13.173.3 Black Hill path - It was reported that the path had been cleared and the scrub from the work had been left on the recently planted saplings. Cllr Ventham informed the meeting that both the path and the field belonged to Dr May and it was his men that were doing the work. He also reminded people that this is not a public right of way.

The Chairman introduced Mr Tom Rubython – UKIP candidate for the area who is now living in the village. It is his intention to attend all parish council meetings within the district.

13.174 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr P Wharf.

13.175 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2014

A copy of the minutes had been given to all members prior to the start of the meeting. Cllr House proposed them to be a true and accurate representation of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed unanimously. The minutes were signed by the Chairman in the presence of the meeting.

13.176 Matters arising from those minutes, not covered by this agenda

13.176.1 Tolpuddle wind turbines – The proposal has been reduced to five turbines which will be slightly smaller than those originally planned. It was noted that the Marsdons Pit planning application for wind turbines has been passed on Appeal.

13.176.2 New School update – Cllr Wharf reported that he had attended a meeting with the project manager and all is going ahead as planned. Cllr Munnings reported that he had met with Colin Everston a week ago and they are going to be surveying the access route for the new school in the next 2 to 3 weeks. This will involve the digging of exploratory holes on Souls Moor. The scheme is coming together and it hoped to have a detailed plan by June which will go to public consultation and a full planning application will be submitted in July.

13.177 To receive declarations of interest in accordance with S94 of the LGA 1972 and confirm any requests for dispensations

No interests were declared and no requests for dispensations had been received.

13.178 Key Topics

13.178.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Plan has been tidied up in accordance with the requirements of the District Council. The main issue now is that the Local Plan highlights 2 sites for development but the Neighbourhood Plan highlights 5. PDC are currently saying that, because of this, we are not in conformity with their Plan. We are disputing this but have yet to have that debate. It is the Parish Council's belief that we are not disputing the Plan, merely adding to it and including local elements. Cllr Fairhurst added that the NP includes an item stating we ultimately want a southern bypass and want the land protected. PDC are saying there will be no money available for a bypass before 2026 so it should not be included. This will also be a point that will be contended when we meet with PDC again. A meeting will be arranged.

ACTION: CLERK

13.178.2 Open Spaces Project

Cllr Pitcher reported that the process has been started and the first meeting took place on 5th March 2014. Tony Bates has suggested that the name of the site should include the word "local" as this will draw more funding. To this end, the name "Bere Regis Local Nature Reserve" was suggested which will include the parcel of land on Souls Moor and the land to the northern side of the stream. This was unanimously agreed.

There is a workshop arranged for Saturday 17th May when Sara Williams will give a talk on the Bere Stream and how to maintain it. The outlying area for the memorial garden, skate park and open gym were all discussed.

A document will be drawn up for consultation which will encompass all the ideas discussed. Detailed plans will be drawn up for the skate park on the Elder Road site. There will be a meeting next week attended by Alison Bennett, Cllr Pitcher and Jethro Loader to discuss this.

Cllr Ventham suggested trying to involve Graham Preece of Tilhill in this group.

ACTION: CLLR PITCHER

It was noted that Alison Bennett spoke about the Open Space on Community Radio on Saturday morning.

13.178.3 May Election Arrangements

The nomination packs will be available from the 28th March for anyone wishing to stand. When the timetable has been published by PDC, it will be put on the web site and notice boards as well as on the Facebook page.

ACTION: CLERK

13.179 To receive the County & District Councillor's Report

Although not able to attend the meeting, there were two items Cllr Wharf wished to have raised.

A Mr Paul Doyle of West Street had been in touch regarding the parking that takes place in West Street. In particular, there is a problem when a group of musicians leave their cars parked in the Cyril Wood area whilst they pick up the coach. It is understood that this refers to the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and a letter will be sent asking them to use the car park.

ACTION: CLERK

The Parish Council support grant from PDC will be phased out over the next 4 years. We are fortunate that we have built up sufficient reserve over the years to be able to weather this to a certain extent.

13.180 Finance

13.180.1 To approve monthly expenditure

The following payments had been requested:

B House	NeighbourCar expenses	1576	118.39
BWBSL	50% of cemetery stand pipe annual fee	1577	77.00
DATC	Annual conference fees	1578	18.00
A King	Lengthsman – March 2014	1579	1856.47
Mrs A Crocker	March wages + expenses	1580	702.23
HMRC	March PAYE & NIC	1581	106.70

The total amount requested from the Precept is £2,878.79. The payments were proposed by Cllr Alderman, seconded by Cllr Howard and agreed unanimously. The cheques were signed by two councillors in the presence of the meeting.

The Clerk reported that DCC Highways were intending to submit a claim under the Bellwin Scheme. This scheme is a central government fund, established to support local authorities when the effects of an unexpected event present them with significant additional costs. Parishes with Lengthsman who had also worked extra hours clearing fallen trees, etc. were invited to submit a claim which would be included. Having gone back through the last 3 months' invoices, the Clerk has submitted a claim for £1,279.31.

13.180.2 To confirm reconciliation of accounts

A copy had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. There were no comments made or queries raised.

13.180.3 To review the position against budget to date

A copy had been issued to all members prior to the start of the meeting. There were no comments made or queries raised.

13.180.4 To consider participating in the Local Government Pension Scheme

In order to access the LGPS, it is necessary for the Parish Council to pass a statutory resolution and amend the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations accordingly. The Parish Council has been budgeting for this for the last year, so funds have been set aside. It was proposed by Cllr Ventham, seconded by Cllr C Maunder and agreed unanimously that the Council resolve to participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme on behalf of the Clerk (a required notice of this intention has been placed on the notice board). It was resolved to commence the scheme on the 1st April 2014.

The Clerk will arrange for the appropriate documentation to be submitted.

ACTION: CLERK

13.181 Planning & Housing

13.181.1 Planning Applications:

There were no planning applications during the month.

13.181.2 Tree Work Applications:

There were no tree work applications during the month.

13.181.3PDC Planning Survey – Cllr Ventham raised the issue that he is unhappy when we, as a parish council, either support or do not support a particular application and the officer takes a contrary view. He feels that, under such a circumstance, the application should go before the Planning Committee and we should have the right to speak. In addition, if there is considerable local support or opposition, the same should apply. Officers should not, on their own, be allowed to override local opinion.

If we believe in local democracy, it seems wrong that the officers should override these on their own initiative. This is a power that is seemingly unchecked by councillors.

Cllr Munnings – Cllr Wharf did talk about this slightly. Councils are under pressure to determine as many applications as they can by delegated powers. If a decision has been made because of a particular planning policy, then the officer should be able to come back and tell us the application is contrary to planning policy.

If there is an objective reason why they differ from our view, then they should come back to us and tell us. But if it is purely the subjective opinion of the officer and there is no policy issue involved, the application should go before the Planning Committee. One of the suggestions for Localism was to pass decisions regarding certain applications to the Parish Councils to determine. Whilst this is not something we would wish to do, it is felt that our opinions should be listened to. We know more about our local community than the officer.

The Clerk and Cllr Munnings will liaise on a suitable response.

ACTION: CLLR MUNNINGS/CLERK

13.182Village Environment

13.182.1 Business Group Update

Nothing to report at this time. Cllr Duncanson will arrange a meeting with John Scott and, if he feels up to it, will start the group moving again.

13.182.2 Lengthsman Scheme

Cllr Howard reported the situation to date. Anthony King had picked up the reigns when Paul Critchell was unable to continue and we are now in a position to formalise the current situation. Members had been sent a copy of the proposed contract for consideration. He explained that the Parish Council must also endorse the use of Tim Sadd as the Lengthsman's assistant under the terms of the contract. It was proposed by Cllr Howard that we enter into a contract with effect from the 1st April, issue the side letter and send the termination letter to Paul. This was seconded by Cllr Munnings and agreed unanimously.

ACTION: CLERK

13.182.3 Souls Moor

There was a small working party led by Tony Bates that cleared the area by the board walk to encourage the orchids.

The Clerk is in the process of drawing up the grazing licence.

ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Pitcher reported that the open area at the Southbrook end of Souls Moor will need to be cut by a tractor mower this season. Cllr Ventham suggested contacting Vitacress and he will speak to Doreen.

ACTION: CLLR VENTHAM

Signage for the Bere Regis Local Nature Reserve – Tony Bates has submitted a grant application to Wild Purbeck for a £1,000 grant for 4 information boards.

The Clerk will chase Wessex Water to see how the grant application is going for getting the water to Souls Moor.

ACTION: CLERK

Cllr C Maunder asked if there was something going to be done about the path from the bridge to the back of Egdon Close. Cllr Ventham reported that DCC will be looking at this as it will form part of the safe route to school so will need to be upgraded. The path to the north side of the hedge will also have to be upgraded. Cllr Pitcher reported that this was on the agenda for the next meeting and they will be looking to get some quotes for upgrading this path.

ACTION: CLLR PITCHER

13.182.5 Rights of Way – The footpath running from the back of Shitterton up to Black Hill is not a right of way but is used regularly. The Parish Council will try to get this path formalised and placed on the definitive map. The bottom part of this land is now owned by Brian May and the top half by the Debenhams. Cllr Fairhurst asked after the progress of the path along the back of Shitterton. The Clerk reported that this has been adopted but will confirm this and pass the appropriate forms to Cllr Fairhurst.

ACTION: CLERK

Cllr Ventham reported that he had been contacted by Brian May's assistant. She wishes to establish an educational facility in the village to raise awareness of environmental issues. At this stage, Cllr Ventham has suggested she come to the village and have a look around and see if something can be done in conjunction with the school.

13.182.4 Defects

- Trees down by roundabout

13.183 Police, Traffic, Public Transport and Roads

13.183.1 Bere Regis NeighbourCar Scheme

The scheme is now up and running. Cllr House reported there was a successful launch on the 8th March at which a number of new clients were signed up. There are now 16 clients in Bere Regis, Tolpuddle, and Winterborne Kingston. It is now necessary to get some volunteer drivers from those villages. She would like to do Q & A article for the parish magazine. There are currently 10 volunteer drivers, all based in Bere Regis. Cllr Duncanson asked about the youngsters going to college or for interviews – would they be able to take advantage of the scheme? Cllr House reminded members that we had originally said yes to this. She has got some information about the “Wheels to Work” scheme which will be passed to the Banter group to see if they could make use of it.

13.183.2 Community Speedwatch Update

The Clerk and PCSO had visited the sites to carry out a Risk Assessment. The site at the top of West Street was felt not to be suitable as there was insufficient visibility for vehicles coming from the Roke Road direction. Once completed, the Risk Assessment reports will be sent to the Clerk and a suitable date will be arranged for the volunteers to receive training.

ACTION: CLERK

13.184 Children & Youth

13.184.1 Play area & general update

Cllr Pitcher reported that the trampoline is now installed. He has carried out an inspection of the play park this afternoon and passed the report to the Clerk. There are some things that need to be done as soon as possible. The fence repair has started with the hedge being removed. He asked permission to look into the purchase of some software in order to formalise the inspections. He and the Clerk will look into this.

ACTION: CLLR PITCHER/CLERK

Skate Park – Cllr Pitcher will be meeting with a contractor who will draw up some visualisations for sending out to the parish.

Kick Wall – The future of this had been discussed at length and it may be removed from the site. If this is the case, Cllr Munnings will see if it can be used by the new first school.

Youth Shelter – This may also go and a new purpose built one installed.

Cllr Howard asked if it would be possible to see a final account for the play park. The Clerk will sort one out for next month.

ACTION: CLERK

13.184.2 Banter Group update

Cllr Duncanson reported that the bank account is now open. The initial £200 cheque will be re-issued. DYA are holding a talent competition and the Banter group will be putting an entry in. The current age range for those attending the group is from 13 to 16 and, in general, about 15 attend each week.

13.185 Community Liaison

13.185.1 PPG – Cllr C Maunder reported the group held a health event on 8th March. Although the numbers attending was not particularly high, those that did come were very helpful. Overall, it was a successful day. The initial results from the survey: 247 returns - 97% were happy with the present appointment system. 96% were in favour of the changes that were being made.

20:29 Cllr T Maunder arrived.

The results will be published in the parish magazine. At some stage in the future there will be a further use of the room currently being used as a coffee room to another consultation room.

13.185.2 WWI commemorations – Cllr Ventham reported that there is now a rough programme of events taking shape. There will be a Pop in Performance in June 2014, a commemoration service on 4th August perhaps with a procession to the church, a series of lectures – 2 a year; half on social issues and the other on something military. The first lecture in November this year will be on the battle of Coronnel. Phil Ventham still needs to know if anyone wishes to attend one of the war cemeteries or battlefield tours. Turning the Drax hall into a WWI tea room is being thought about. It is hoped that the commemorations will culminate in the opening of the sensory garden in 2019. The tally of those who served from the village is about 220 men.

13.186 Correspondence Received and meetings attended

A list of all correspondence received since the last meeting had been issued to all members. The Clerk highlighted the feedback form recently received from DCC Highways and drew members' attention to the following points:-

- A small annual programme of footway slurry sealing is funded, but this covers less than 1% of the footway asset. This means the overall condition of the footway network will continue to decline. Otherwise, they are managed through routine inspections and defect repairs.
- There is no funding allocated for cycleways. They are only maintained through the repair of reported defects.
- Capital allocations for drainage assets are also very small. Reductions in routine budgets mean that cyclic maintenance is restricted to gully emptying only. Other activities, such as ditch clearance, grip clearance and emptying soakaways are now all limited to ad-hoc maintenance.
- There is very little maintenance of signs other than replacing or repairing warning and safety signs in accordance with the code of practice. There is no funding for directional or information sign replacement when they are either damaged or have reached the end of their life. Sign cleaning has also been dropped from the cyclic schedule due to lack of funding.

All this means that, should we wish to continue to maintain the high standards we have achieved to date, more work will be put on the Lengthsman. It is also now more important than ever to use the PEM system to report any issues.

13.187 Items for the April meeting

- Footpaths
- Cemetery contract

13.188 Communications

Items to be included in the Parish Magazine:

- Loss of community support grant and lengthsman's grant
- Acquisition of the north side of the stream
- Lengthsman and what he does
- NeighbourCar – Cllr House to put some words together.
- Volunteer of the Year Award
- Christmas trees repeated again

Cllr Alderman reported that he has been walking a collie for a gentleman who had lived at 22 Old Barn Road but has recently died. The family has no money to pay for the funeral and wanted some advice on what to do. The best suggestion would be to go to Citizens Advice. The Clerk will make a few telephone calls and report back to Cllr Alderman.

Cllr Ventham reported on the Volunteer of the Year Award which was given to Tony Shaves this year. The event took place on 6th March at PDC

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:48 pm

Signed:

Dated: