

Bacton Parish Council

MINUTES

of the meeting held at Bacton Village Hall, on

Monday 14th November 2022 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: David Chambers (Chairman), Philip Jeffries, Vanessa Kingsley and Graham Macausland.

In attendance: Maximilian Clay - Clerk to the Council
District Cllr Mellen
County Cllr Stringer
Two members of the public

Nov22-1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Robert Black, Bernard Coxhead, Gail Wigglesworth and Paul Wigglesworth and the Council resolved to approve the reasons.

Nov22-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations

Cllr Chambers declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6.a.i.

Nov22-3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Council resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on the 17th October were a true record and that the Chairman be authorised to sign them as such.

Nov22-4. District & County Councillor Reports

- a. District Cllr Mellen had submitted a written report and highlighted that the Winter Warmth grant scheme that had now closed. This was a fund that provided financial support for organisations offering warm spaces for the public; it is likely that further funds will be made available. D Cllr Mellen also reminded the meeting that the Plant a Tree for Life scheme, whereby a tree is donated to the parents of any new born babies or adopted children, remains open and he reported that his locality fund is now almost exhausted.
- b. County Councillor Stringer reported that Council finances would be tight but that there was a measure of protection for social care costs but these are rising sharply. He also highlighted problems with information about the Turkey Hall Road closure.

Nov22-5. Public Forum

A member of the public raised the issue of community resilience and asked whether the village has an emergency plan. In response it was highlighted that there is an Emergency Plan, which was developed in conjunction with Cotton Parish Council and which is held by the County Council, but that the plan has not been reviewed for some time. It was agreed that the Plan would therefore be looked at, with a view to updating it.

Nov22-6. Planning

a. Responses to Application Consultations:

i. DC/22/05376 - St Mary's Church, Bacton.

Construction of metal handrails and railings to footbridge (replacing existing); Erection of 'Welcome' sign.

In discussion the work to the bridge was welcomed and the design considered appropriate, however, it was felt that the Welcome sign element of the proposal was excessively large and could easily be adversely affected by wind. The view of the Council was that this element should be removed and that if it was not removed the wording should be amended to include the words 'to St Mary's' as the welcome would otherwise feel too abstract.

ii. **DC/22/05189** - Red House Farm, Rectory Road, Bacton.

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for Existing use or development. Town and Country Planning Act 1990: Section 191 as amended by Section 10 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991. Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Use of land for Storage and Distribution (B8) and creation of bund to the North and West.

There was lengthy discussion about this application and in particular the disparity between different elements of the application documentation; for example, in one place it is stated that there have been movements over the past ten or more years “to and from the site 24 hours a day” and in another it is stated that there are movements ‘within’ the site 24 hours a day. As the former would be a breach of the planning conditions and would have caused disturbance to neighbours, and in the light of evidence proffered by residents, it was felt that, at most, only the latter statement could be true. The disparity of information, the lack of uncontested evidence to support the application, and the fact that some ways in which the site is being used are not covered by any extant planning and are not the subject of any current application, led the Council to resolve to object to it. The Council resolved to suggest that, to avoid creeping and stealth enlargement of the scope of planning permission, and because of the complexities and lack of clarity, the only sensible and open way forward would be for the applicants to be required to make a fresh, substantive planning application, enabling the proposals to be properly assessed on their merits.

b. Outcome of Previous Applications: neither of the applications considered at the previous meeting had yet been determined.

c. Land for Potential Community Building/ Use

The Clerk reported that Bellway, the developer of the land south of Birch Avenue, had applied for consent to re-designate an area of land as an area of open space, despite the fact that the Council had previously registered its wish to have the area earmarked for future community development use. It seems that the District Council had not completed the necessary steps to register the stated wish of the Parish Council to earmark the land for this purpose, which meant that not only was the designation in doubt but also the provision of links to the utility network.

D Cllr Mellen was following this up and had been led to believe there was a way of correcting matters. The Clerk had written to the Chief Planning Officer to register the Council’s dismay and to ask what steps were being taken to remedy the situation. The Council expressed great concern about the matter and resolved to formally endorse the letter that the Clerk had sent.

Nov22-7. Finance

- a. **Receipts and Payments** - The schedule of receipts and payments was received and it was noted that, following national agreement of a pay increase for Clerks, the Clerk’s remuneration had been adjusted and backpay from the 1st April 2022 had been applied. The Council resolved to approve this and the schedule of payments, with the additions of £40 for Remembrance wreaths (one to reimbursed by Culford Parish Council) and £188.80 for emergency flood works at Shop Green. A revised schedule incorporating the latter was prepared for inclusion in the records.
- b. **Budget** - The Council noted that the next meeting would consider the first draft budget for 2023/24.

Nov22-8. Traffic Calming

The Chairman reported that a meeting with a County Council officer from Highways had taken place to review matters. The meeting had clarified the issues to be taken into consideration when placing traffic-calming measures and these included lighting and drainage. In order to support any action the County Council requires speed surveys to be undertaken at a cost of £400 each. It was pointed out to them that the village has been collecting speed data for some years and also that a neighbouring village had been charged half the stated fee.

In discussion the Council agreed that it was highly regrettable that the speeding data that had been carefully collected by the village was not deemed sufficient but resolved to allocate up to £1,000 towards the cost of the surveys and Cllr Stringer had agreed to look at supporting this expense. It was also resolved that the surveys should cover all the areas that may need traffic calming (including, for example, Wyverstone Road) so that a comprehensive approach could be adopted. Highways had been asked whether the Council could use an alternative contractor for these surveys but a response had not yet been received.

Nov22-9. Working Group Reports

a. Neighbourhood Plan

It had proved difficult to fix dates for the presentations by consultants but two potential dates were discussed and it was agreed to try for the morning of 29th November - the Clerk will notify all members once this is confirmed.

b. Events - The Coronation will be on the 6th May 2023 but details are not yet known. Cllr Jeffries reported that it was felt that, in view of the King's statement that he wished the coronation to be slimmed down, final plans for a celebratory event in Bacton should be held back until details are known. However, the initial thought was to hold a late afternoon feast on the day of the coronation, followed by dancing.

c. Greens Spaces - The Clerk had given the go-ahead for the works at Cow Green and Shop Green and a quotation had now been received for cutting the hedge at the cemetery, for £400. Council resolved to approve this expenditure and the Clerk would confirm that those works can go forward. In view of the increased cost of energy, it was agreed to offer payment for the electricity for Christmas lights to those who allow the parish Council to use their supply.

The fencing along the road opposite the village hall was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk would contact Highways to tell them about the need for repairs to the fence that they installed when they installed the pathway.

d. Road Safety - Speeding data from Coppings Corner, Bacton Bull and the new site on Broad Road, for the last two weeks of October and the first fortnight of November respectively, had been received and had been discussed under the item 8, above. It was also noted that speeds of over 100mph were still being recorded outside Bacton Bull and that, surprisingly, Broad Road had had the least amount of speeding. The volumes of traffic using the road through the village compared to Broad Road may suggest that more people are using the village as an alternative route to the B1113.

There are now only two people volunteering on the SpeedWatch scheme and it has become necessary to recruit more volunteers, with the support of the Council. It was felt that more knowledge, within the Council, of the way that the scheme works at a practical level would help the Council to appreciate the issue involved and thereby underline the Council's support for the scheme. The Chairman volunteered to join volunteers for a session and urged other councillors to do the same. The Chairman moved a motion of support for the SpeedWatch scheme and this was passed by acclamation.

e. The Work of the Warden – A quote for remedial works to the swings had been sought but the manufacturer felt that a completely new installation was required. In discussion the Council resolved that this advice should be reviewed and that Cllr Macausland would look at the problem with the Village Warden and get quotations for repairs, if deemed possible, and otherwise for alternative sources for supply and installation of new equipment. The Warden also highlighted that the Shop Green pond was now filling up well and that he would be willing to carry on maintaining the Garden of Reflection next year, in his own time.

A request had been received by Bacton Football Club for checks on their defibrillator at the Scout Hut to be included in the regular checks to the village defibrillators, made by the Village Warden. This was agreed; financial responsibility for maintenance will continue to sit with the Club.

As mentioned under item 7a, emergency works had been necessary, arising from flooding,

at Shop Green and the cost of £188.80 was ratified by the Council

Nov22-10. Grant of Wayleave at Cow Green

The Council had received a request for permission to connect services (primarily water) to a planned house at Cow Green. After discussion, and hearing from one of the owners of the site, the principle of granting an easement was agreed subject to legal arrangements and all costs being borne by the owners.

Nov22-11. Co-option of Councillor

This will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Nov22-12. Councillors' Items for Future Agendas and Reports Relating to Meetings

Cllr Jeffries reported that he had attended the annual meeting of the horticultural society and thanked them for the wonderful border that they had planted out at the village hall, for the Jubilee. At the meeting it had become clear that the lack of an external water tap at the village hall was problematic and it was agreed to suggest to the Village Hall committee that they make an application for grant funding from the Council for this installation.

Councillor Jeffries also extended thanks to the British Legion for leading the Remembrance Day Parade and it was resolved that the Clerk would write to express thanks from the Council. Cllr Kingsley reported that the play equipment lacks anything suitable for very young children and it was agreed that this would be considered as part of neighbourhood and infrastructure investment planning.

Three matters were raised for future discussion: updating of the Emergency Plan, consideration of a sum to be offered to the Village Hall Committee to support a suggestion that wi-fi be installed in the hall, and the purchase of a large screen television for displaying information at meetings.

Reserved Business

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press were excluded from the meeting at this point, due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

Nov22-13. Staffing

The Council heard that the nominee for appointment to the office of Clerk had withdrawn. Council noted that the Clerk's attendance by Zoom had worked well and could work even better if the village hall were connected to the internet (although councillors have to attend physically).

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chairman

Date