

## BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday 7 October 2013 at Bishopstone Village Hall

**Those Present:** Simon Jenkins (Chair), Ian Thompson (Vice Chair), Lesley Drewett (Clerk), Douglas Stevens, Nigel Crisp, Stuart McGuigan, Ian Thomas, Julian Cooke, Cllr Andrew Bennett.

**1. Approved Apologies**

Andy Greenhalgh.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

Register of Interest

The Clerk asked whether anyone had any changes to their register of interest; there were none.

**3. Andrea Barrett (AB) Locality Lead South – SBC**

The Chair welcomed AB to the meeting. He explained that he would like to bring forward Public Question Time as a large number of parishioners were present.

After Public Question Time, the Chair thanked AB for her patience and asked her to explain her role. She asked whether Councillors knew Tracy Scott, which they did, and went on to explain that the Localities team had undergone some changes. The South Locality covers Lawn and Chiseldon, Wroughton and Wichelstowe, Old Town and the villages of Ridgeway ward; the Locality Chair is Cllr Bennett.

Last year they were set three main goals:

1. To contribute to SBC strategic priorities. (80% of Council Tax goes on adult social care, which is a great financial challenge now and in the future).
2. To contribute to SBC change programme, which is one of the Council's corporate priorities, the main one being adult social care.
3. To strengthen families by looking at community capacity and volunteering. Here, they will be introducing Community Navigators in GP surgeries to prevent people going on long term medication. Tracy Scott is involved in a befriending telephone service called "call in time". They also have Health Ambassadors that they work with.

The Localities team supports the ward members and the Locality Chair in getting information back from the villages, to ensure that SBC departments understand the local views. The Chair asked how they would get to know local views and AB explained that they are reliant on conversations with ward members; they are currently working on rural listening, which entails knocking on doors to introduce themselves and determine any problems encountered.

The Chair advised AB of the Parish Times which is issued monthly; he wondered whether the contact details for AB and Tracy Scott should be included as a regular item. Both Cllr Bennett and AB agreed with this; AB suggested using the Parish Times for good news stories.

**Action: The Clerk is to include contact details for Andrea Barrett and Tracy Scott in the Parish Times.**

Signed: .....

Date: .....

The Chair suggested that the Mobile Library which attends the villages once a fortnight on a Wednesday and school pick up times could present opportunities to meet residents. AB stated that they would like to have a presence, but did not wish to be overpowering. It was also suggested that they could have a presence at the annual fete.

AB reminded Councillors of the quarterly Locality meetings. The next meeting is on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013 at Croft School and one of the agenda items is "Changes to the bus service". The meeting after that will be on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at Liddington Village Hall. She then went on to remind Councillors of the Locality Fund which is made up of three elements:

- The Highways Fund, £25,000, for potholes, yellow lines etc. (low priority work within the Highway budget).
- Streetsmart Hours, which is for work that is not part of the normal work schedule.
- Grassroots Grants fund to award to local groups for admin purposes, including new groups. Parish Councils cannot apply for these grants; however a village hall committee could apply.

There are 12 Community Speed Watch schemes up and running; Bishopstone needs one more volunteer. AB is to ask Tracy Scott to contact Cllr Stevens.

**Action: Another article is to be placed in the Parish Times. (Complete)**

A Councillor asked for a solution to the requirement for a large litter bin on Charlbury Hill. AB agreed to follow up on this.

The Chair thanked AB for attending and she thanked Councillors for letting her attend; she decided to stay for the remainder of the meeting.

#### **4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Chair asked for a proposition that the minutes of the September meeting be accepted as a true record. The proposition was put forward by Cllr McGuigan, and unanimously agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

All actions from the previous meeting had been completed except for the following:

##### CCE Services - Broadband

As Cllr Greenhalgh was not in attendance, this action was carried forward. A Councillor asked whether a map of what should be maintained could be placed on the website.

**Action: Cllr Greenhalgh is to add the maps to the website for parishioners' information.**

##### Kim Steele – Forest School Leader

This action was carried forward.

**Action: Cllr Bennett is to arrange a meeting for Kim Steele with Jonathan Wilshaw.**

##### Community Speed Watch

This was discussed in item 3.

##### Reports from Borough Councillor – Septic tank, Hinton Parva

This action was carried forward.

**Action: Cllr Bennett is to notify Liz Smith-Gibbons (Conservation Officer) to ensure she has been involved with regard to conservation and archaeological issues.**

Cllr Bennett further advised Councillors that he now had the plans for the replacement sewage treatment plant and the tender documents will be despatched within the next two days; the closing date will be three weeks after that. He stated that it was estimated that the work would commence on site in November and take approximately two and a half weeks to complete. Swindon Commercial Services will carry out the work. The plant will need power, and SBC have identified a power source on the adjacent highway. The plant will produce clear water only, which he thought would discharge to a ditch, and it would have the capacity to deal with waste from fifty to sixty people – based on eleven properties connected, each with four bedrooms. Everything will be completed before Christmas.

Councillors recommended that the old system should be de-commissioned, emptied, cleaned and backfilled. They also asked for further detail on where the water would discharge to.

Cllr Bennett stated that the proposals are currently going through Planning for approval. Despite assurances that the Legal Department of SBC had contacted all householders connected to the existing system, a Councillor had stated prior to the meeting that this was not the case. Cllr Bennett reported that he had spoken to the Chief Executive of SBC, who is urging the Legal Department to conclude negotiations with each property, including getting an agreement on future running costs.

**Action: Cllr Bennett is to seek clarification from SBC that the old system will be decommissioned as requested, and that the water will discharge into a ditch to run away, rather than discharge into the field.**

**Action: Cllr Bennett will keep in touch with the Legal Department's progress, via the Chief Executive.**

#### Local Plan

The Chair explained that he had not been able to contact the Clerk of Bourton Parish Council as she had been on holiday and this has anyway been overtaken by events. Councillors have seen the letter that the Consortium and Wanborough Parish Council have sent to SBC. Since then a letter has been received, stating that the Inspector has concerns over the Local Plan and there is to be a meeting at Steam Museum on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013; it is open to Councillors to attend the meeting.

#### Brambling Cottage

A letter had not been drafted as it had been felt that the decision should be revisited to find a clear way forward. The Chair declared an interest as he had not been at the last meeting. Cllr Thomas felt all Councillors should be in agreement before proceeding any further. The Chair's original recommendation was that, as a matter of courtesy, the issue should be discussed with the individual before a letter was written.

**Action: Cllrs Thomas and Greenhalgh.**

### 6. **Public Question Time**

The Chair stopped the meeting and brought this item forward; it has been left in this part of the minutes for continuity. There were c25 members of the public present, all for the discussion on the decision to cancel the No 47 bus service, and the Chair thanked them for their attendance.

The Chair reminded the meeting that Kate Griffiths had produced a poster asking parishioners to attend the last Parish Council meeting and that subsequently an article had been placed in the Parish Times last month regarding the SBC proposal to cancel the No 47 bus service.

A large group of parishioners from Bishopstone, Hinton Parva and Wanborough had attended the Open Forum and Public Question Time at the SBC Cabinet meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> September to protest about the withdrawal of the No 47 bus. SBC's website had also been swamped with emails.

Since then, meetings had been arranged by SBC on 27<sup>th</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> October to discuss replacement arrangements; attendance had included Cllr Keith Williams (SBC Cabinet member and Lead Councillor for Transport), the Leader of the Council, Cllr Bennett, the Chairs of Bishopstone and Wanborough Parish Councils and officials of SBC.

The Chair distributed route maps and timetables to illustrate the new arrangements which had been put in place in response to the concern of residents. The key points are:

Signed: .....

Date: .....

- The No 47 bus route has been deregistered by Thamesdown Transport and will cease on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2013.
- A new No 90 bus service, run by GoRide CIC, will commence on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013; it will run to / from Hungerford to Swindon, via a number of places en route, including Bishopstone and Hinton Parva; capacity will be sixteen passengers, with no standing room.
- The 46A and 48A buses are to be diverted through Wanborough on the Swindon / Marlborough / Hungerford routes. This will provide a service to / from Wanborough to Swindon.

All present were concerned that demand might exceed the capacity of the bus at certain peak times of day.

**Post meeting notes:** Consultation with GoRide CIC since the meeting has identified the following:

- When the 16 passenger limit is reached GoRide's 'no passenger left behind' policy kicks in. This backup plan is triggered when passenger volume boarding in Lambourn exceeds a threshold. (This threshold is to be defined). The exact plan is still to be finalised but on other current GoRide bus routes the backup plan has involved an additional backup bus and/or 8 seater taxis running the bus route. The details of this backup plan will be published on the village website as soon as they become known to us, at <http://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/parishcouncil/sample-page/parish-council-news/>
- Fares will be the same as at present and it will be possible to purchase tickets on the bus; Thamesdown Transport season tickets will be refunded and new GoRide ones may be purchased in books of ten Frequent Travellers tickets; it was pointed out that these will not be valid in Swindon.
- OAP passes will remain valid on the new service.
- The 46A & 48A will continue on a Thamesdown Transport ticket.

The Chair suggested that some volunteers be available at the bus stop to deal with any overflow on the first day; a parishioner offered her help. Cllr Bennett explained that Nigel Hale, who is the SBC official officer in charge of bus services, will be on alert with Taxi services. Parishioners then asked several questions, including the rise in numbers during school holidays.

**Action: Cllr Bennett is to address this with Nigel Hale.**

During the next two weeks the bus stop timetables will be changed by Thamesdown Transport and leaflets made available on the No 47 bus. There will be an article in the Parish Times and the revised routes and timetables will be posted in the web site and on notice boards.

**Action: The Chair is to provide an article for the Parish Times. (Complete)**

**Action: The Chair is to ensure there is a contact number on the timetable should the bus be full. (Complete)**

Cllr Bennett advised that as this is a community bus service, GoRide are adaptable and have an interest in keeping fares low. He went on to say that SBC have had to respond owing to the heavy public support surrounding the issue and have since admitted that they have been overpaying for the No 47 service. A Councillor felt that this was a misuse of public money and Cllr Bennett advised that one solution would be to take the issue to the Local Government Ombudsman. He recommended that the new service should be allowed to start and then he will endeavour to get something down in writing on how it is functioning.

The Chair pointed out that the initial problem had been the lack of consultation by SBC. The Leader of the Council had promised to set up a review regarding how SBC carry these out, but the Parish Council has not heard anything on this to date.

It was felt that there should be a signed agreement with SBC should the service fall down in the future.

The Chair once again thanked all parishioners who had emailed SBC and attended the meetings; he felt that the pressure exerted had resulted in a reasonable solution. Parishioners thanked Councillors for their help.

The Chair then asked if parishioners had any further items for discussion.

A short debate followed regarding the Council Tax and the services that SBC provide.

A parishioner pointed out that the footpath leading to the Dingle needed attention. The Chair explained that the steps leading into the Dingle are currently being looked at by the SBC footpath representative. The parishioner has a definitive map of the footpaths which he will pass on to the Parish Council. The issue of overhanging trees and long grass was also raised and the Chair advised that this was a discussion point later on the agenda.

A Councillor noted that both bus issues discussed over the last few months could have been easily avoided by proper consultation by SBC. He felt there should be a post mortem and they should make the appropriate changes. AB agreed to take this feedback back as part of the Localities work with members.

**Action: Cllr Bennett and the Chair are to take this back to SBC.**

The Chair then offered parishioners the opportunity to stay for the rest of the meeting and re-started it.

A Councillor asked if the permissive footpath could be cut. This action was carried forward.

**Action: Cllr Stevens is to contact the owner of the permissive footpath.**

#### 7. **Planning**

No planning applications had been received.

The Chair noted that in the Town Clerks' Forum, a paper had been attached by Andy Brown (SBC Service Manager – Development Management) regarding all planning applications which will be dealt with electronically. Cllr Thomas felt that this would only apply to the hard copy of the plans.

**Action: The Clerk will check that notifications will still be received. (Complete)**

#### **Late Receipt of Planning Notifications**

No late planning applications had been received.

#### **GRANTED**

No granted schedules had been received.

#### **REFUSAL**

No refusal schedules had been received.

#### 8. **Reports from Borough Councillor**

Cllr Bennett had reported everything in the first part of the meeting.

#### 9. **Reports from Sub Committees**

There were no reports from the sub committees.

#### 10. **Standing Orders**

Discussions were held on how to bring urgent items to meetings after the agenda is issued. Cllr Thompson has looked into the matter and advised that this is covered by Standing Order 1.6 which states that items that are urgent can be introduced and discussed by the Parish Council, providing that the rationale for not placing them on the agenda is documented in the minutes.

#### 11. **Main Points**

##### Number 47 Bus Service

This item had been discussed under item 6.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

### Septic Tank

This item had been discussed under item 5.4.

### Co-option of Councillor

The Chair asked the two parishioners still in attendance to treat this item with confidentiality. The Clerk had circulated two CV's to Councillors before the meeting and Councillors voted on them. Councillors voted that Kate Griffiths be co-opted onto the Parish Council.

**Action: The Chair is to notify both candidates of the decision. (Complete)**

**Action: The Clerk will ensure that Cllr Griffiths is sent the necessary paperwork. (Complete)**

The Clerk had also received notification of a further parishioner being interested in becoming a Councillor should a vacancy arise in the future.

### Assets of Community Value

Cllr Thomas explained that the application was in, but he had not heard anything at present. He reminded those present that it is an eight week process. If successful, the impact of it is that the True Heart will be registered as an asset of community value and if the owner ever wanted to dispose of it, the Parish Council would have to be notified as the registrar and would have six months to formulate a bid. Cllr Thomas has tried to contact the Architect, but the Planning Consultant has advised the owner to market the property properly.

### Award of Lengthman Contract

Cllr Thompson had sent some information in a pack to Councillors before the meeting. It was felt that there was not enough information on the first invoice provided by the lengthman. The footpath representatives were happy to be the contact for payments, but felt that more information should be provided for them to ratify the invoice. The Chair is happy to act as a co-ordinating point and for people to register requests with him. Councillors felt this was the best way to work. It was agreed that the invoice should be paid this month.

**Action: The Clerk is to forward a copy of the original invoice to the Chair. (Complete)**

### Swindon Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013

The Chair reminded Councillors that feedback had to be with SBC by 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and Cllr Thomas agreed to draft a letter for Councillors' comments. He advised Councillors that they should not be too concerned over the sites shown in the document provided. It was felt that a note should be included stating that nothing had been specified for Hinton Parva or Russley Park.

**Action: Cllr Thomas is to draft a note for SBC. (Complete)**

### Charitable Donations

A proposal was put forward by Cllr Stevens that the resolution passed in June 2000 for £100 to be set aside for charitable donations each year should be rescinded. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Cooke and unanimously agreed.

**Action: The Clerk is to write to Cruse Bereavement. (Complete)**

### Dangerous Parking

Councillors felt that parking opposite the village hall on the corner of Cues Lane at school times was still a problem. It was felt that as there is now a new Head teacher and Governor and that this may be the time to take control. Councillors wondered whether new signs similar to those generated for the fly tipping problem, which have SBC and police backing, would be beneficial. Flyers could also be placed on windscreens.

The Clerk had also received a complaint about parking in the Wyncies where some residents were making it difficult for elderly and infirm residents to park in the few spaces provided. AB agreed to send through some designs.

**Action: The Chair is to contact the new Head teacher.**

### Poll Cards

Councillors agreed to authorise the covering of the cost of poll cards in the event of a bye-election.

**Action: The Clerk is to notify SBC Electoral Services. (Complete)**

**12. Accounts to be Paid**

The following cheques were presented for approval:

- L D Drewett £8.59

The above expenses were approved for payment by Cllr Stevens, seconded by Cllr Cooke and agreed unanimously by those present.

Cllr Thompson asked the Clerk not to include the Lengthman's cheque with the cheques agreed in the precept and bring it to the front of the agenda. She was also asked to change the wording. The Clerk explained that she had transposed the Inland Revenue amount with her salary on the agenda.

**Action: The Clerk is to contact Allbuild to ask for his invoice in time for the meeting. (Complete)**

**13. Correspondence**

The Chair asked if Councillors wished to view any of the other correspondence. None did.

**14. Parishioners Feedback/Complaints**

Road Maintenance

A Councillor reported some subsidence on Body Horse Hill travelling towards Bishopstone on the left hand side of the road at the top of the second dip.

**Action: The Clerk is to notify Streetsmart. (Complete)**

**Action: Cllr Cooke will meet the representative on site.**

Salt Bins

Councillors asked the Clerk to request that the salt bins in the Parish are filled as soon as possible. AB agreed to take this back to SBC.

**Action: Cllr Bennett is to take this back to SBC.**

Structure at Summer Cottage

A Councillor noted that a structure had appeared at Summer Cottage, West End Lane. The parishioner concerned was still in attendance. He had spoken with the Chair previously and advised that since then he had contacted SBC and had completed an application form for approval under permitted development rights.

Collapsed Tomb

A parishioner had reported a collapsed tomb at the closed churchyard in Hinton Parva to the Clerk who had suggested that Martin Hambidge at SBC be contacted.

Precept

The Chair reminded Councillors that the precept would have to be decided at the December meeting. Suggestions should go to Cllr Crisp, Chair of the Finance sub-committee.

**Action: Cllr Crisp is to put a note out to Councillors. (Complete)**

The Chair thanked Andrea Barrett for staying for the whole meeting.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting, will take place on Monday 4 November 2013 at Hinton Parva Village Hall, starting at 19:30 pm.

**Action: Apologies to the Clerk before the meeting.**

Signed: .....

Date: .....