

## **Minutes of the meeting of Bridford Parish Council held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm in the Village Hall.**

**Present** – Cllr. Padgham (Chairman); Cllr. Purser; Cllr. Gallagher; Cllr. Topley; Cllr. Ashenden-Pearce; 2 members of the public; Ines Pfister Devon Highways; Tamsin Mowat (Clerk).

### **1) PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

An opportunity for members of the public to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business on the agenda, or any matter of interest to the parish. The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed 30 minutes. (Standing Orders 3e and 3f).

Reminder that members of the public are not allowed to raise issues when Council is in committee.

**2) Apologies For Absence:** Cllr. Marriot, Cllr. Andy Swain (Teignbridge District Council) Apologies accepted.

**3) Minutes** – the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were approved and signed.

**4) Declarations Of Interest:** In accordance with the Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have, in items to be considered at this meeting. Members are also reminded that any change to their Declaration of Interests must be notified to the Monitoring Officer at District Council within 28 days of the change. Cllr. Gallagher declared an interest in the Planning application - 0123/24 – Barytes

**5) Welcome to Jamie Ashenden-Pearce as new Parish Councillor;** Jamie signed the Declaration of Acceptance before the meeting and was officially welcomed as a new Parish Councillor to his first meeting.

### **6) District and County Councillor Reports**

District Councillor Purser – nothing to report this month

County Councillor Brook not present this meeting

### **7) Chairman's Report (for information only)**

**Summary of report:** Highways issues were raised and discussed with Ines Pfizer from Devon County Council Highways. A parishioner has been in touch with regards interested in becoming a Councillor; Chair to speak to him to explain role and answer any questions he may have. Full details of the Chairman's Report are available on the website: [Bridford Parish Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes \(bridfordvillage.co.uk\)](http://bridfordvillage.co.uk)

Ines Pfister, Devon County Council (DCC) Highways arrived at 7.05pm. Standing orders suspended for public discussion on Highways to take place.

#### Questions for Ines about Bridford roads:

Parish Snow Warden asked could she please be informed when secondary routes have been gritted to save snow wardens doing them again. Ines to raise with DCC gritting team.

Parishioner raised issues around road closure on Pound Lane Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April – closed overnight and at weekend for surface dressing so will be closed entirely for 2-3 days. Check one.network online for more details. Neadon Lane diversion is extremely difficult. One way system queried but apparently increases speeding and causes other issues. If weather doesn't improve, the work may not even happen at this time. Parishioners upset if not clear when work is to be done as they will have work or appointments to get to. Ines will try and find out from contractors, but they may not be able to confirm due to weather conditions.

Longdown road speed warning sign in 40 mph section of B3212 incorrectly set as 30 mph rather than 40 mph. Clerk to report to Longdown Parish Council Clerk as Ines believes that Parish Council installed it.

Parishioner raised reporting potholes to DCC; that the system is unsatisfactory. Ines said that there is a DCC safety committee who determine the criteria relating to the size of potholes which have to be approved by Government. Safety issues during very wet weather of potholes hidden by puddles. Also an issue with drains flooding or not working properly.

Drains are on a routine schedule of annual inspection, cleaning and maintenance. Drains are on a list to be remedied but council under a lot of pressure with weather causing additional problems and the budget is extremely stretched and Highways understaffed.

Property on Swannaford Road; subsidence on the road – water pouring down off road into shed and garden and flooding. Keep reporting frequently to DCC in order to get it resolved. Cllr. Gallagher asked at what point does it become a dangerous issue of potentially a car or larger vehicle tipping over the side? Needs new stabilisation so a lot of work. Parish Council could put up sign 'Unsuitable for large vehicles.' No budget from DCC currently available for signage.

Parishioner suggested a reminder to go in Unity about recycling boxes to remind people to stack them, so rubbish doesn't blow away and block drains.

Cllr. Purser asked about spring plate on Pound Lane – Ines to investigate. Surface dressing may not work on that section of the road as too wet.

Ines outlined a few further points. Separate Central Government pot of money to help with flooding to houses so those are dealt with as a priority. If work can't take place due to weather it is postponed and then undertaken when possible but might have to be done in poor weather which is not ideal as affects the work. For road closures, unless you live in that road then you should not pass through signs or your insurance becomes invalid.

Clerk to arrange to meet with Ines to discuss ongoing issues.

Standing orders resumed.

## **8) PLANNING**

**Planning Applications** - Dartmoor National Park has asked for observations from the Parish Council on the following planning applications:

0113/24/HRN - Hedgerow Removal Notice of 5m Of Field Boundary, at Westleigh, Devon. Field boundary on the right-hand side of the road from Plaston Green to Westcott. To create a gateway for agricultural purposes. Cllr. Purser proposes no objection and all agreed. Concerns from Parishioners raised with one of the Councillors and noted regarding degradation of the road due to agricultural traffic.

0123/24 - Two agricultural buildings, one for livestock and one for agricultural storage at Barytes, Bridford, Exeter, EX6 7JD. Councillor Emma Gallagher has declared an interest in this planning application. Cllr. Purser proposed support – all in agreement.

### **Planning Decisions**

No decisions this month

## **9) FINANCE**

### **Expenditure**

Website hosting (third party costs) c/o Jarrod Poynton - £209.72 BACS  
Pads for defib Andrew Deptford - £82.74 BACS (retrospective approval needed)  
Clerk's salary – £325.92 Standing Order  
HP Printer for Clerk - £59.99 including six months of ink (then £3.99 per month from September) BACS  
HP paper - £12.96 (1000 sheets) from Amazon BACS  
ICO Annual Subscription - £40 BACS (retrospective approval needed)  
Email hosting annual cost increase from £18 to £20 - BACS  
Home office expenses £6 per week for February and March £48 and Standing Order set up for future payments of £6 per week

All expenditure approved.

Bank Reconciliation and Statement circulated prior to meeting.

Cllr. Gallagher proposed to accept accounts and all in agreement.

## **10) Village Hall update**

Solicitors contacted the Parish Council to find out the current value of the Village Hall as the Land Registry application fee is based on the value of the property being registered. Ray Spurr, Chair of the VH Committee, very kindly provided the figure of £807,513.00 which is based on the current insurance figure for the main building and sheds. The solicitors confirmed today that the Land Registry Application will now be submitted and sent the PC their bill for the work undertaken. The solicitors bill was £100 less than anticipated but the Land Registry costs were a lot higher than first estimated. The solicitors said this was based purely on the (high) valuation of the hall and was in the hands of the Land Registry. Building now registered with Land Registry and work with Solicitors completed. Overall expenditure was £1327.80 including £130 VAT. Following the meeting Parish Council Chair will contact Village Hall Chair to update him. Cllr. Gallagher commented that it secured the longevity of the ownership of the village hall for the public to enjoy – securing the future of a public asset. Cllr. Purser proposed to approve expenditure for Solicitors and all agreed. Clerk to pay bill and reclaim VAT.

## **11) Wildlife Warden's report and Verges maintenance plan for 2024/25**

Thanks to Lucy Smeardon for her report and thanks to Graham Dicker. Signage on verges – needs to come back to Parish Council for discussion. Budget under grounds maintenance could potentially be used. Query re. contract for Graham Dicker; Clerk to contact Graham to renew contract. Cllr. Gallagher proposed to accept plan and all in agreement.

**12) Village garden bench** – Cllr. Topley showed photo of proposed bench – three-seater bench and position in garden. Person who would be funding bench would like it fixed down but others are not fixed. Cllr. Padgham wondered if it would be useful to have all the benches able to move for events such as carol singing etc. For security it might be better to be fixed. Cllr. Topley proposed and all in agreement.

**13) Parish Council storage** – storage for files and other items in Village Hall downstairs next to existing cupboard. Cllr. Padgham to contact Village Hall Chair to ask if we can create some storage for Parish Council. Mugs to be given to Village Fete. Cllr. Gallagher proposed to accept and all in agreement.

**14) Road Warden scheme with DCC** – ask in Unity if anyone is interested in undertaking training and attach link for people to read carefully. Insurance is an issue. Third party only from DCC so further insurance would be needed. We could consider employing own lengthsman with duty of filling in potholes as well as part of their duty. Training in chainsaws, safety etc. also necessary but seems beyond a volunteer role. Proposed to put article in Unity first by Cllr. Purser and all agreed.

**15) Review Financial Regulations – annual review** – Cllr. Topley proposed to adopt the regulations and all in agreement.

**16) Annual Parish Meeting – agree a date and plan.** Cllr. Padgham sent details of last year’s meeting by email to Clerk for reference in arranging this year’s meeting. Invitations need to be sent personally and followed up – list from last year. Hold it just before the June meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> June. Generic message to Teign Valley page and on Website and Facebook page. Celebration of what’s going on in the village and a chance to meet people. Cllr. Pearce suggested we might be able to create a WhatsApp community to send information round. Cllr. Gallagher wondered if it would be a Parish Council WhatsApp or a general public village WhatsApp. Need to consider as an agenda item at the next meeting. Community WhatsApp – Cllr. Ashenden Pearce said that you can disable other people from commenting – comments for information only. Consider making Parish Meeting more of an event for 2025. Date proposed by Cllr. Gallagher and agreed by all.

**17) Risk assessments – updated and need approval** – fence in play park in poor repair and needs mending – Cllr. Topley to contact TDC to get it repaired. Graham Dicker – contract needs renewing and need a copy of his public liability certificate – Clerk to contact. Cllr. Topley proposed approval of risk assessments and all in agreement.

**18) Financial reporting arrangements** – Clerk to check and update headings and arrange to update spreadsheet and send to Councillors quarterly. Cllr. Topley proposed and all in agreement.

**19) Parish Council mobile with Wifi calling** – suggestions for source of new phone: ID - £6 a month – purchase phone outright as an unlocked phone. Try Giff Gaff. Check Currys and Car Phone Warehouse. Phone budget secondhand potentially. Clerk to investigate options and email to Councillors with preferred solution and decision to be made by Councillors in the meantime. Cllr. Topley proposed and all in agreement.

## **20) Clerk's report (for information only)**

Banking update – Santander accounts closed (awaiting confirmation on current account – Clerk to send letter) and all funds transferred successfully to Unity Bank. Work taken place to balance accounts with transfer of funds.

Contact details update – email password received from Joan Banks, previous Clerk, and reset - forwarding email address set up (ICO and Play Park inspection emails went to old email address)

Defibrillator update – pads replaced, sticker updated and beeping stopped

ROSPA playpark inspection update – inspection has taken place and report received with recommendations – play park action plan needs updating and repairs to be done (Playdale parts – who will fit them?) Cllr. Topley to bring plan to next meeting and add to May’s agenda for approval of repairs.

King’s portrait update – due for delivery this week

Facebook and Website update – website details updated and agenda and event on events page created for road closure – requested support from Jarrod with creating news page. Also need to update financial details. Facebook still to do.

Microsoft account storage update – storage limit had been exceeded so new work was not being saved, have now temporarily resolved this but may need to increase storage at later date.

Cllr. Padgham thanked the Clerk for her hard work this month.

## **21) Councillor's reports and External Meetings attended (for information only)**

Cllr. Topley asked about Village welcome booklet to be updated by Judy and Anne and printed by Clerk. Also printing costs for minutes and agendas to two village notice boards and Highways updates. Send invoice to Clerk with VAT receipt to claim VAT back. Cllr. Gallagher proposed to agree and all in agreement.

**Items for Information** - The next council meeting will be on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall and is the Parish Council Annual meeting where the elections for Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Parish Council will take place.

**Meeting closed at 9.04pm**

### **Email Information**

Planning application information x2 (sent 26/03/24)

Teignbridge Local Plan (sent 19/3/24)

Wildlife warden plan (re-sent 26/03/24)

DALC update (sent 27/03/24)

Rural Affordable Homes TDC webinars (sent 27/03/24)

Road Warden scheme information from DCC (sent 27/03/24 and 28/03/24)

NALC bulletin (sent 28/03/24)

Financial regulations (sent 28/03/24)

Risk assessments (sent 28/03/24)

### Chairman's report

1 As agreed, following March PC Meeting the street naming consultation was completed and submitted by the Chair

2 Concerns raised, at the March PC meeting regarding residents' issues with Highways, were forwarded to Highways. These included broken road signs at Smithacott Cross and Laployd Cross, the hole in the bridge at the bottom of Hole Hill opposite Poole Farm House, the leaky spring plates on Pound Lane, the broken barrier at the top of Church Lane and serious subsidence on Neadon Lane which is causing water to flood into a resident's garden and outbuildings. Highways were also asked to consider installing a sign indicating the road between the phone box and/ Book Exchange and Woodland Park was unsuitable for large vehicles. Highways confirmed attendance at the April PC meeting on the morning of the meeting. All Councillors promptly informed via email and several residents informed including the Snow Warden, Neadon Lane residents with subsidence problem and owners of Bridford Inn.

3 DNPA followed up on concerns forwarded by the PC re stables which had been built without Planning Permission.

4 Santander Corporate Account is finally closed and a cheque sent to Penny Clapham, Locum Clerk, has been paid into the Unity Bank Account by Tamsin Mowat, PC Clerk.

Chair has now been advised that the Santander Business Account, which has a zero balance, can only be closed on receipt of a formal letter from the PC signed by all signatories including J Banks, previous Clerk. This will be actioned.

5 The PC have received an expression of interest from a gentleman interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. PC Clerk has sent the relevant information and invited him to the meeting this evening. The Chair offered to have a conversation and answer any questions.