

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 P.M. ON MONDAY, 14TH DECEMBER 2015

PRESENT: S Firbank (Chairman), G Miller, J Morgan, T Heaton, A Miller,
L Jones, M Martin, P Williams (from 7.40pm) and I McVie (Clerk).
APOLOGIES: M Withers, Andrew Cattaway and PCSO Vicki Levy (Police).
ATTENDING: 26 members of the public were present

15.133 OPEN FORUM

SF welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting and reminded all present that the "Open Forum" is an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions or make statements. Once the "Open Forum" is concluded the public are present to watch and listen to proceedings only. SF asked that if there were any further representations to be made concerning the site for a new village hall that there was no need to repeat previous comments from last month's meeting or any made by e mail or letter to the council. He informed the meeting that all the written representations from the public would be made available on the village website for everyone to read. There were no items raised.

15.134 DECLARATIONS of INTEREST

None.

15.135 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The clerk informed the meeting that there had been representations concerning accuracy and these were, one on page 34, the last sentence of the first paragraph should read 'The 2014 NPG questionnaire showed that over 80% of respondents accepted, in principle, an enabling development to release land for a new hall' and secondly that on page 33 the first line of the last paragraph the year of the March meeting be added. Then finally that on page 35 the last sentence of paragraph 5 be changed to 'Peter Nathan asked if there could be a show of hands to see if a show of hands for a preferred site was wanted by those present, this was declined by the Chairman'. Following a discussion these amendments were agreed and the minutes were agreed by all as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

15.136 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Item 15.114.4 IM confirmed he had asked DCC to provide a quote for two suitable signs and fitting for the two laybys to warn offenders not to illegally deposit litter or fly tip.

15.137 REPORTS BY THE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLOR

None for this meeting.

15.138 PLANNING MATTERS

15.138.1 Applications received – None

15.108.2 Applications granted – None

15.108.3 Applications withdrawn - None

All applications can be viewed on dorsetforyou planning portal or via the village website.

15.138.4 Bourton Mill

SF informed the meeting that the owner, Mr Fay has been successful in his grant application for central funding to progress developing the site, but that it would take a number of weeks for it to be provided to then enable work to commence. GM asked if once the grant is given the owner could sell the mill site with the outline planning permission and the grant. The clerk stated that the understanding was the grant is provided solely to the applicant for the sole use of developing the site, he could not pass it on.

15.138.5 Solar/Wind/Photovoltaic Sites – Clapton Farm, Cucklington – Solar Farm 15/03373

PW, in any other business, asked if the parish council wished to maintain its objection to the associated planning application in Tinkers Lane for cabling works to the Clapton Farm development. Following a discussion it was agreed that PW would inform NDDC that the planning application did not need to go before a full committee as our objection was not substantial and would waste the committee's time. PW confirmed he would be inform NDDC for the 16/12/15 application date. (Please note that AM would have declared a disclosable pecuniary interest as a neighbour, because the solar cabling will be going across his land, but he was not aware the matter would be discussed. He did not contribute to any discussion and there was no vote on the subject. The clerk has confirmed that AM had met his legal requirements given the circumstances).

15.139 FINANCE

15.139.1 Accounts to be paid – Three

DAPTC	Outstanding payment for 2015 copies of councillors guide	£ 8.50
HMRC	PAYE to 5/1/16	£320.80
S.Firbank	Re-imbusement for donation for Christmas tree	£100.00

15.139.2 Accounts received – None.

15.139.3 Grants and Donations. None.

15.140 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP

SF read out the following 'The NPG, together with its consultant, made a presentation to members of the public and parish councillors at the 23rd November parish council meeting. The presentation highlighted two broadly similar sites for consideration as potential locations for a new village hall. All of this was carried out in accordance with the neighbourhood plan (NP) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA) requirements to properly consider any reasonable and credible alternative before allocating a development site within the draft NP.

Following this meeting there has been an orchestrated and personal campaign by some residents who support one of the sites which calls into question the integrity of the NPG chairman, secretary and the NPG generally. This is also not the first time that this has happened.

These are serious matters and have affected their private lives. As a result, the NPG chairman and secretary feel that they wish to take time out to reflect over the Christmas holiday period whether or not they wish to continue their involvement in the NP process. A final decision will be made at the January PC meeting.

15.141 NEW VILLAGE HALL

SF informed the meeting that since the November meeting councillors have received over 20 responses from residents and also from both the VHMC and NPG. We have also sought and been provided with clarification on certain points from NDDC.

Councillors met informally last Friday and were able to not only review the submissions from everyone but also to explore in greater detail the options open to them at this point.

These are

1. Select Sandways Farm
2. Select Jubilee Field
3. Place both sites in the neighbourhood plan and go through the process that would in turn then include consultation to all the village as part of the neighbourhood planning, complete the required referendum that every adult villager will have a vote on and then if successful progress to the final stages which will include the Planning Inspector reviewing and deciding if the plan is acceptable.
4. A small working group is set up with an independent chair to engage with both owners and establish further information to minimise the financial cost upon the village to actually build a hall. This would entail the selected Chairman to work with a representative from the VHMC and the NPG and may involve the need for the employment of a consultant with the necessary skill set to support the work. This group would have a terms of reference and a timescale to minimise any delay in progressing the neighbourhood plan. There would also need to be a mechanism in place to ensure this working group does not adversely impact on the neighbourhood planning process both from the legal perspective and also in terms of timeliness.

As agreed at the November meeting the council will now consider the options and make a decision based on these four options.

I would ask that members of the public respect the parish council procedures and not interrupt or chatter amongst yourselves so that the councillors can focus on their task tonight. Thank you.

SF then invited the councillors to discuss the options.

TH said that the leaflet that went to all households explained the reasons for the village hall site selection having to be within the neighbourhood plan and made reference to the parish council being responsible for nominating one of two broadly similar sites. The subsequent November parish meeting and representations from residents also identified the possibility of nominating both the sites within the neighbourhood plan and forming a working group to establish from the two owners what each proposed development would actually provide for the village on top of the allocated land. (At this point the meeting was disturbed by a member of the public arriving and

depositing a hand written representation to the clerk. This has been added to the website and the Chairman has subsequently received an apology for this interruption). TH went on to say that in his opinion the letters from the VHMC and NPG clearly showed a preference for the fourth option of establishing the working group to gain information to make a more informed decision of which site to select, he also noted that the NPG letter did indicate that the option of putting both sites in the draft neighbourhood plan had merit. TH stressed that it is important to acknowledge the VHMC and NPG views and the parish council cannot ignore their representations and the fact that neither opted for a particular site. He stated that he considered options 3 or 4 as possible options but was concerned that by opting for both sites to go into the neighbourhood plan it would mean the ultimate decision would be made by the district council. TH stated he believed the decision should be taken locally and that to do this the council needed better information on exactly what the two owners were proposing and in turn what they would offer to minimise the financial requirements on the village to build and set up a new hall, therefore his choice would be option 4, the working group. JM stated that she agreed with TH but due to some of the very personal and vitriolic behaviour exhibited by a small number of villagers towards the NPG and the parish council it would be important to ensure the working group is independent to give the parish council the best picture of the advantages and disadvantages of both sites.

AM stated that he also agreed with the views from TH and pointed out that whatever decision is finally made someone will not be happy. Therefore the working group doing the additional work will help the council come up with the best choice.

GM stated that he agreed with TH opening remarks and reminded the meeting that as the elected parish council they are in place to make the decision and that it is right that the parish council do make the decision. GM then asked if the Jubilee Field site was in the original sites looked at. A number of councillors confirmed this was the case and they also confirmed that the original number of sites looked at was 14. GM observed that in his experience both sites are on grade 3 agricultural land but the ownership of each site is different with one being managed through a trust. GM further stated that he had personally done some measuring and that the Sandways site was more central for all the village. In his view 95% of residents would live to the east of Jubilee Field while it would be considerably less for Sandways, therefore if it was a choice between the two sites as it stands now he would opt for Sandways.

AM stressed if option 4 was selected there would be a need to make sure the work was completed in a timely fashion, all councillors agreed with this observation.

TH stated that he could not see why the argument of centrality was so important and observed that the village pub sits in the eastern end of the village and is well supported by all of the village.

GM said that he viewed the more central location as an important factor.

SF stated that he did not see this as such an issue as a number of others obviously do.

TH pointed out that it could be argued the heart of the village is near the school and church and that a village hall nearer this location would complement this existing arrangement. TH went on to say that a site in the geographic centre of the village might cause problems to a greater number of people in terms of traffic movement, noise, and visual impact.

LJ pointed out that when the 14 sites were looked some like the mill site were viewed as not suitable due to noise pollution from a hall and interestingly at the Sandways site this issue was dismissed as not having an impact on residents.

MM stated that it would be important not to stall as the selection of a site had been going on too long and was rightly frustrating residents, but she stated that at this point the council and for that matter the residents do not have sufficient information to satisfactorily make a decision on either Sandways or Jubilee Field. Also she felt that a lot of the village did not realise there was a second possibility and the Jubilee Field site has come as a surprise. MM stated that this may have contributed to some people not supporting this option. She stated that she felt people were in the dark and that the council do need more information on both sites to make a better and more informed decision. MM stated that she believed public opinion would be influenced by have more information on costings and in turn will see what level of fund raising each site is likely to need. This in turn would help the public understand the ultimate decision the council makes. MM then said that the Jubilee site is a surprising site as it is towards the edge of the village, but the public need to know more about this site. She reminded the meeting that she currently has no preference for either site and would want more information as to what the two owners would provide. She pointed out that Jubilee Field is nearer the church and school and given this proximity could have benefits for providing accessible parking for events at the school and church. She also pointed out the school, church and cemetery could provide increased business for a suitably located village

hall. MM stated that she acknowledged the need to establish a better understanding of the finances that would need to be raised but reminded everyone that funding levels would on their own not be a deal breaker. She stated that at this point she was in favour of option four.

PW stated that the responses from the village to the councillors had been interesting and further stressed that the choice between the two sites is a finely balanced decision. He acknowledged that the argument for a more central location had merit but pointed out that where this has been done in Cucklington the site is not used due to noise pollution in a residential area with too many residents. PW further stated that he did not have sufficient information on both sites to make an informed decision at this time. In particular the likely financial and fund raising levels required were lacking and for each site these could be different. He explained this by pointing out that on the Sandways site there is a large barn on the prospective hall location which would need to be removed and the ground cleared. This would be an additional cost that Jubilee Field would not have. Therefore the council need to know what the developer would propose and be prepared to pay for, to reduce the impact on the funds required by the village. PW also pointed out that both developers need to provide more detail and costings on what they would provide such as services and road building. TH stated that he liked the points made by MM concerning proximity to existing village facilities. He also pointed out that some villagers rightly raised concerns about the number and type of houses each development was proposing. He stated that the Jubilee site offered housing that is more in keeping with the village design statement. MM supported this and stated it would be important to get a percentage of low cost housing on the eventual site.

GM stated that the village had been trying to progress a new hall for 20 years and it keeps being delayed. He said the need to progress things was important.

SF said that initially he favoured putting both sites in the neighbourhood plan, but this would abdicate the parish councillors' responsibilities. He reminded everyone that Bourton was one of only seven parish councils who had enough candidates to hold an election this year. He therefore felt that the village had elected councillors to make decisions and therefore he felt that option four was a better choice as he wanted more information on both sites to make an informed decision. He stated that the timescale would be important as the process needs to minimise any further delay in progressing the neighbourhood plan. At this point the clerk reminded the meeting that there would need to be a mechanism in place to ensure that any working group did not adversely impact on the overall neighbourhood plan and did not adversely affect the future independent inspection of the final plan by the appointed planning inspector. MM stated if the option of the working group was taken there would be a need to make sure as much information was made available to the public.

PW said that many villagers were surprised when the Jubilee field option was introduced so a good open process, perhaps including a drop in session for the public, would be a good idea.

SF asked if there were any more points and if not asked if there were any proposals.

PW proposed that a 'small working group is set up with an independent chair to engage with both owners and establish further information to minimise the financial cost upon the village to actually build a hall. This would entail the selected Chairman to work with a representative from the VHMC and the NPG and may involve the need for the employment of a consultant with the necessary skill set to support the work. This group would have a terms of reference and a timescale to minimise any delay in progressing the neighbourhood plan. There would also need to be a mechanism in place to ensure this working group does not adversely impact on the neighbourhood planning process both from the legal perspective and also in terms of timeliness'. This was seconded by MM. SF confirmed there were no counter proposals and all councillors voted.

Proposed by PW, seconded by MM and a unanimous vote in support by all councillors.

GM then asked for clarity on the neighbourhood planning process and the clerk confirmed that any selected village hall site has to be included as part of the neighbourhood plan. In turn the proposed plan would go to consultation for all households, then there would be a referendum and if the majority of the village accepted the proposed plan it would ultimately go through to an independent planning inspector to decide whether it met legislation and was appropriate for adoption.

15.142

SF confirmed that DAPTC were reviewing their training and once this was provided the clerk would progress a training evening delivered by DAPTC at Bourton for all councillors to attend.

15.143 FOOTPATHS

SF confirmed that Footpath 11 had been closed for safety reasons following a member of the public being injured due to the waterlogged state of the path. It was confirmed the footpath would

remain closed for initially 21 days and most probably a further 21 days to allow the ground to dry out if the weather permitted. But, that at this stage it would be unlikely that DCC, due to the costs would be able to overcome the flooding to enable the route to become walkable at this time. TH informed the meeting that Bernie Sullivan and a number of other residents had formed a working party who last month along with the ranger had completed a large amount of repair works on footpaths including repairs on 3 and 5. He stated that the volunteers had worked exceptionally hard and he asked that the council show their appreciation by formally recording their thanks to Bernie Sullivan and the working party. All councillors supported this view.

PLEASE NOTE Any member of the public can contact DCC on the dorsetforyou website, footpaths section and report a problem on line.

15.143.1 Mile markers and posts.

SF confirmed the two mile markers were being progressed by Mere Fabricating.

15.144 HIGHWAYS

IM confirmed he had asked DCC to provide a quote for two suitable signs and fitting for the two laybys to warn offenders not to illegally deposit litter or fly tip.

ACTION: IM to report back to next meeting once cost obtained from DCC.

15.145 TRANSPORT

SF stated that there were no further updates at this time.

15.146 COMMUNITY SAFETY – MOBILE SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE

PW confirmed that the Speed Watch Group had been out and that the speed detector device (SID) had been used on the existing roadside pole. PW stated there had been positive feedback about the effectiveness of the SID and the group were looking forward to using it in a further two locations once the poles had been fitted by DCC. IM confirmed this had been requested but that DCC had been busy and apologised for the delay. IM confirmed the poles would be fitted to warn motorists as they entered the village from Wincanton and near the telephone exchange to warn motorists as they drive into the village from Gillingham or Zeals.

SF then informed the meeting that the current neighbourhood watch or home watch would continue and groups would be able to continue or set up new watches in their road, but the police are rolling out individual access to their system to enable more people to be part of the Dorset Police neighbourhood watch. He reminded everyone of the need to support the police and report suspicious activity if they see it. This can be done by the internet through the watch scheme or via 101 or if it is an emergency on 999.

15.147 CORRESPONDENCE

SF confirmed all correspondence this month had been included within the agenda and meeting and that the clerk will return to displaying all correspondence on agendas and minutes now that the parish council can return to the usual level of agenda items for discussion and decision.

15.148 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Please see the items in the minutes under 15.138.5 and 15.143.

15.149 DATE OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY 25TH JANUARY 2016 AT 7PM.

Chairman: S.Firbank

Date: 14th December 2015

Note: The minutes will be reviewed and formally ratified by the BPC on 25th January 2016