

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL

HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7PM ON MONDAY, ~~31ST MARCH 28TH 2014~~ APRIL 2014

PRESENT: S Firbank (Chairman), A Miller, M Withers, L Jones,
G Miller, P Williams, C Price.

APOLOGIES: D Lawes, H Baker, A.Cattaway (County Councillor).

ATTENDING: Iain McVie (The Clerk) and 11 members of the public.

14.1 APOLOGIES – AS ABOVE

14.2 OPEN FORUM

SF welcomed everyone to the meeting. He 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.

A member of the public provided a statement on behalf of the **Wildlife and Habitats Group**.

'Last week experts from DWT checked 15 ponds in and around the village for signs of the presence of newts. The results were disappointing, as only two ponds had newts and only one had 100% proof of newt eggs, including Great Crested newts. All the others were not good for wildlife in their present state, being stocked with Grass Cutting Carp and/or Signal Crayfish, or very much lacking in vegetation and signs of invertebrates for other, unknown, reasons. Village ponds throughout the UK have suffered a huge decline over the years. Most are beyond repair due to silting up, pesticides and fertiliser pollution. I believe that the parish would make a very strong and positive statement in helping to reverse the trend, if it were able to create its own new Village Pond, fed with a mixture of ground water and rain water runoff, if and when amenity land comes into its possession for the new hall. It would provide a really good example to other parishes'. SF thanked the member of the public for his update and pointed out that whilst the council supported the banks and verges project he had received feedback that the village was looking scruffy and that there was a need to ensure there was clear signage and a mown strip on the road and path sides.

CP and PW pointed out that there had also been an increase in litter and dog excrement being left behind by dog walkers. All Councillors agreed there was a need to maintain a safe and tidy strip of grass on all verges and banks.

SF asked that the Wildlife and Habitat Group ensure this is done and that any agreements with the Senior Ranger or DCC be managed through the Parish Council. He also asked that signage is purchased by the group of which the council will pay for that explains to the public what is being done on the village banks and verges. This was agreed by the representatives of the Wildlife and Habitats Group and any updates will be given through the Neighbourhood Planning Group standing item in the agenda.

A member of the public provided a statement on behalf of **St George's Church**.

'In the last couple of weeks many people have said how much they appreciate having the church in Bourton, but very few support its fund-raising events. Recently, we held an auction of household goods, with the school hall packed with good quality items for sale and the potential to raise hundreds of pounds and nobody came. At our "Community Lunch" yesterday, 45 people attended - less than half from the village.

The excellent Military Wives Choir from Warminster will be coming to St George's Church on Saturday the 17th May for a concert which will start at 7pm. Tickets are £10 and are available from Harry Lawes and the garage. Please spread the word - if you want the church, support it.

SF asked all present to attend this event if possible.

14.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

S. Firbank and C Price declared a personal interest in Bourton Mill (neighbour).

M Withers declared a personal interest in the potential Village Hall site (neighbour).

14.4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. **Proposed by PW and Seconded by GM.**

14.5 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Cemetery Wall: IM informed the meeting that he had completed two applications for external funding and that both had not met the criteria for lottery funding. He further stated that it was unlikely any other sources of funding could be found which left the Council to fund any works. IM reminded the meeting that there were two current quotes with different options for completion of any works. Following discussion the meeting felt that the cost was substantial and that further confirmation of the exact works to be completed was needed and how long the work would take.

ACTION: LJ to confirm with the preferred applicant the extent of the works including time.

IM informed the meeting that there was also a need to have the cemetery cleared of items of rubble, waste and the pruning of trees and bushes within the grounds.

ACTION: IM to obtain a costing from Phil Cowell for the next meeting.

SF asked GM to chase up the farmer for last year's rent of the new cemetery field for grazing.

ACTION: GM to update the next meeting.

Village Sign

SF confirmed that the sign had been and was being renovated. **Action completed.**

Village Gates

LJ updated the meeting with the cost of resin gates. A number of the Councillors expressed concern about the cost and the need to ensure the gates were sufficient in size.

PW asked that before any decision is made could it be confirmed that the installation of such gates does contribute to road safety as this was a key driver when the council made the original decision to progress such gates.

ACTION: LJ to progress information on the road safety benefits as a matter of urgency.

Benches

IM confirmed the benches had been purchased, delivered and the ground fixings ordered with Phil Cowell on standby to fit both benches in the playground. **Action completed.**

Zeal's planning application

IM confirmed there was no further update from Wiltshire and SF confirmed. **Action completed.**

Village War Memorial

IM stated the application to the War Graves Charity had not been successful, but, that the advice was to have the memorial professionally cleaned only and he had been provided with a list of recommended professional War Memorial cleaners.

ACTION: IM to update April Meeting.

NDDC Community Infrastructure Levy for planning applications.

ACTION: MW asked this action to be discharged. **Action completed.**

All other actions covered in main items on the agenda.

14.6 REPORT BY THE DISTRICT AND/OR COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Report from District Councillor

GM updated the meeting that the Boundary Commission changes had now been finalised as previously discussed. (Please note a copy of the final boundary changes can be found on the Boundary Commission website, Bourton Village website and in the large village noticeboard.)

GM confirmed Hilary Ritchie the current NDDC development officer responsible for accessing funding streams for the North Dorset area is taking early retirement. He stated she had been very successful in securing external funding for use across North Dorset and will be missed. He stated that her function will now come under the direction of John Hammond within the Development Control Department. He reminded all that this is another example of NDDC having to find further budget savings and are continuing to explore savings in collaboration with West Dorset.

GM then updated the meeting concerning the disbandment of the Local Action Group (LAG), 'Sowing Seeds', who were responsible for producing grants that promoted countryside issues such as the successful Motcombe Voluntary Shop. He informed the meeting that the previous members of Sowing Seeds had formed a new group called the Heart of Wessex with a proposal to take over. This group though would cover only parts of North Dorset and certain areas of Wiltshire and Somerset using the A303 as a dividing line. Whilst this would include Bourton it would not include other large areas of North Dorset. He confirmed that there would be no additional funding it would just be redistributed. He informed the meeting that there has been some criticism of Sowing Seeds and its promotion of Heart of Wessex.

MW reminded the meeting that Sowing Seeds were a source of funding for such things as perhaps contribution to new projects such as village halls.

SF informed the meeting that there is a counter proposal to create a North Dorset version that would replicate the current 'Chalk and Cheese' group that covers South Dorset. This option is favoured by NDDC and there is a need for Parish Councils to provide a view in writing by 9th May. He added that as Councillors were unsighted on the correspondence in relation to this matter he would arrange for all the information to be forwarded to them this week, seek views and reply on behalf of the Council with the majority view.

ACTION: SF/IM to provide relevant information and inform NDDC/CPEND/Heart of Wessex.

14.7 Planning

14.7.1 Applications received/granted/withdrawn

None.

14.7.2 Bourton Mill

SF updated the meeting that there remains the strong possibility for the front part of the site to be cleared/demolished in preparation for development of the site.

MW stated that the Wildlife and Habitats Group would like to approach the owner to see if they could be allowed access to one part of the site to complete some work to promote wildlife and habitat growth. SF stated we would need to ask the owner formally.

ACTION: SF to write to owner for his permission.

IM updated the meeting as to the powers that the NDDC and DCC have in relation to ensuring the mill site is safe and secure. He covered powers in relation to the Town and Country Act Planning Act 1990, the Buildings Act 1984, the Environment Act 1990 and the Control of Pollution Act 1974. He briefly explained the powers and sanctions for each and that under certain legislation the NDDC would be able to demand that a site is cleared and if this was not done complete the work themselves with the owner liable for costs or if the owner did not or could not pay then put effectively a charge on the land that any future purchaser would have to cover prior to taking ownership of the land. IM then reminded the meeting that in 2012 NDDC had confirmed that in the existing circumstances they did not consider it appropriate to use these enforcement methods and that this was also their current position. IM confirmed he sought independent advice from DAPTC/NALC who confirmed that the current position with the mill site would not justify such enforcement action and that the existing steps taken by the owner to secure the site is sufficient and individuals who trespass are responsible for their own safety as there is a clear perimeter fence to the site.

PW expressed concern that the current perimeter of the site was poorly secured and porous and individuals could easily breach the current fencing.

SF then confirmed that the Council will continue to communicate with NDDC Planning and Environment to ensure the site is kept as safe and secure as is possible.

14.7.3 Wind Turbines/Photovoltaic solar arrays

PW updated the meeting concerning the 175 acre solar development application at Mapperton in East Dorset, which has recently been refused. He stated this is an important decision as it sets a precedence that such applications are not guaranteed and local councils with strong local support can successfully resist such applications.

14.8 FINANCE

14.8.1 Accounts to be paid

H. Baker	Bench purchases	£ 300.00
I. McVIE	IT Equipment for planning	£ 356.97
Proctors	Fees for NVH (BVHMC)	£3298.54
AON Insurance	Insurance for 2014/1	£ 360.00
M. Withers	NPG Expenses	£ 47.00
G. Overington	NPG Expenses	£ 370.78
P. Cowell	Cemetery Cuts	£ 170.00

Proposed by PW, Seconded by LJ and agreed by all.

14.8.2 Accounts received

LC Undertakers, Mere	Burial Fees	£185.40
J. Mann	Purchase old benches	£ 50.00

14.8.3 Grants & Donations

None.

14.9 NEW VILLAGE HALL

PW provided an update following the meeting held on 14th April with John Hammond (JH) of NDDC and SF (BPC), MW (BPC and NPG), PW (BPC & VHMC), HP (VHMC) and IM (Parish Clerk).

PW confirmed that the meeting was to establish the view of NDDC in relation to the recent changes of planning regulations for the conversion of agricultural buildings to housing and how this could affect the potential new village hall site. PW confirmed that there was a record of the meeting kept by IM and asked that these be attached to the minutes as they are an accurate account of the meeting. (The notes are attached to the minutes on the village website and the large notice board). PW used the notes to update the meeting and stressed that JH confirmed the owners of the barn on the proposed new hall site could apply to convert the existing barn to a maximum of three houses, but, there are a number of caveats that must be met. PW confirmed that the owner of the land would be able to maximise the value of their property with an application to build a new hall with a small housing development rather than just a development of the existing barn within the process of the neighbourhood plan.

PW also confirmed that JH acknowledged the current NDDC Local Plan could be delayed if it does not meet the independent examination, this in turn would delay any local neighbourhood plan.

PW explained though that if such a delay did occur JH advised that there is a Plan B that could be considered without undermining the neighbourhood planning process. This alternative though to be agreed by the NDDC Members must be evidenced based in terms of need for a village hall, resident support for the hall with housing, a clear business case that will raise sufficient funds to complete a new hall builds and finally the support of the parish council.

PW concluded that he felt the meeting had been very positive providing clarity and options.

MW pointed out that the observation that a delay of the NDDC local plan would delay the neighbourhood plan was incorrect as long as any proposal did not go against the existing policy and the principles of the emerging policy.

MW added that whilst John Hammond had said that the barn may be capable of conversion to one or two houses he later he accepted that because of its construction and need for total demolition, it may well not meet the criteria envisaged in the new planning guidelines which was recorded and is in the notes made by IM.

He also reminded the meeting that JH made the point that NDDC Members may feel setting a precedent could adversely affect future applications and decisions elsewhere in the district. MW also stressed that JH had made the point that whatever route was used it had to go through the SEA process.

SF and MW reminded all that whatever route was taken, there would need to be a robust and up to date Business Plan prepared that clearly shows how the new village hall will be financed.

MW concluded that the meeting had been very positive and provided clarity on the new regulations and the requirements that must be met regardless of which route was taken.

SF confirmed that the result of the current questionnaire was required regardless of which route is taken to progress the project and looked forward to seeing what the residents view are.

ACTION: PW to arrange a meeting between NPG and Brimble Lea after the results from the forthcoming questionnaire are known. (Please note this action is ongoing)

ACTION: IM to attach copy of the meeting notes to the minutes.

Note: Action completed with copy of notes on the website and the large noticeboard.

14.10 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP

MW informed the meeting that the NPG, assisted by a number of volunteers, delivered over 700 individual questionnaires to every inhabited household in Bourton some two weeks ago.

Collections are underway and, at the time of writing, the numbers collected total some 57%. More are expected over the next week or so as many people were away over the Easter holiday period. The NPG have decided that there will be a final cut-off date for collecting questionnaires of Friday 9th May 2014. This will enable those inputting the data to finalise their extensive work and the results should be available for publication by the end of May.

The headline results and update on NP progress will be included in a newsletter to be delivered to each household and posted on the village website. It will also include a date for two public drop-in sessions to view the results in full and discuss matters with NPG members.

MW informed the meeting that it was with regret that the NPG will be losing the services of Cathy Price whose contribution to the group will be sorely missed. Cathy has kindly offered to help in the future as a volunteer. The group have given their thanks to Cathy for her sterling work and wish her well for the future. Two new members have been recruited, Fran Gillett, a solicitor and Brian Martin, former Parish Clerk to assist in the policy writing and quasi-legal stages of the process.

The NPG's application to Planning Aid England for them to extend their programme of providing professional planning assistance to the NPG has been approved. This now aligns with the timetable from the Community Development Foundation who is providing funding for the group.

There has been a lot of work done through the NPG's Environment Focus Group and the Wildlife and Habitats Group, where Bernard Sullivan has been a key leader. As a result of this Bourton has been asked to contribute to the Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) and Dorset County Council (DCC) Parish Workshop on Saturday 17th May from 10am to 1pm at the Dorford Centre, Dorchester. This workshop is to outline how DWT and the newly formed Countryside Services at DCC can work together with Parish Councils to enhance and promote wildlife and the care of the environment in the countryside, villages, hedges and towns of Dorset. This will cover green spaces, school grounds, verges, hedges, churchyards, gardens, rights of way. There will be brief presentations from DWT and DCC plus a number of case study presentations from parishes across Dorset. Bernard Sullivan has agreed to do a presentation at the workshop to show what is being done in Bourton.

14.11 TRAINING

SF confirmed no new updates.

14.12 HIGHWAYS

SF Confirm no new updates.

14.13 TRANSPORT

SF Confirm no new updates.

14.14 COMMUNITY SAFETY

SF stated that there had been no take up on the Speedwatch Coordinator role and that the advert would remain on the notice boards. CP stated that she understood there had been one member of the public who is interested.

ACTION: CP to canvass individual for this volunteer role and update the next meeting.

14.15 CORRESPONDENCE

12/04/14	BVHMC	Invoice for NVH work by Proctors for £3298.54 - To April BPC
12/04/14	Heritage Lottery Fund	Acknowledgement of application for funding to repair cemetery - Noted
12/04/14	NALC	Consultation document to Clerks - Not applicable to BPC- Filed
12/04/14	War Memorial Trust	Letter confirming decision for funding - To Councillors and April BPC
12/04/14	Outdoor Play People	Advert for services - Filed
12/04/14	Dorset Waste Partnership	Information for recycling - Website
12/04/14	Dorset Library Service	2014 Mobile Library Schedule - BVHMC, Website and Main Noticeboard
12/04/14	NDDC	NDDC Newsletter - All Councillors and Website
12/04/14	DAPTC	Updated Training dates for 2014. - Circulated to all Councillors
12/04/14	DAPTC	Chief Executive Newsletter - Circulated to all Councillors
12/04/14	Wiltshire Council	Information on Wiltshire County Council Spatial Planning - NPG & Filed
12/04/14	DAPTC	Advice from NDDC, NALC and DAPTC for Enforcement Powers in relation Bourton Mill Site - Chairman & Councillor Williams updated - April BPC
17/04/14	AON Insurance	2014/15 Premium £1,640.78 - For April BPC
17/04/14	DCC	Literature on events for Wildlife Groups - To NPG
17/04/14	Dorset Countryside News	Newsletter - Website
17/04/14	DCC	Advert for job vacancy - DCC - Filed
17/04/14	Sowing Seeds (LAG)	Information to Chairman - Filed
17/04/14	DAPTC	Request for applicants for Northern Area DAPTC Chairman - April BPC
24/04/14	WF Planning	Advert for services - Filed
24/04/14	Dorset Fingerposts	Advert for services - Filed
24/04/14	E Mail from Mr Watkins	Report of full waste bins New Road/Mill Rise - Reported DWP
27/04/14	DCC	2014/15 DCC Maintenance Schedule - Chairman and Filed

Please contact the clerk if you require any further information.

14.16 A.O.B.

SF asked that the BPC owned tent be stored elsewhere. AM agreed to store the item on behalf of the council would collect it from SF who thanked AM.

PW pointed out that there were overflowing general waste bin and dog waste bins in the village and it appears that the Dorset Waste Partnerships had stopped emptying them. IM confirmed that he had informed the appropriate council department who have confirmed that both sets of bins will be cleared.

IM provided the meeting with an update on the possible cost of resurfacing the playground. He confirmed the quotes he had range from £7500 to £8000. He confirmed the existing surface will last for at least another 18m months with only a need for minor repairs and given the potential expense on the cemetery wall that it may be better to wait till next financial year and build this expense into the 2015/16 budget. All councillors agreed to this course of action.

SF highlighted a new scheme called 'Wheels to Work' that provides two wheeled transport at reduced purchase prices and is aimed at young adults to assist in enabling people to get to work from rural or remote communities. SF asked this to be placed on the village website, which has been done on 29th April.

14.17 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS -

MONDAY 12TH MAY 2014 (ANNUAL PARISH MEETING)

MONDAY 19TH MAY 2014 (AGM AND MONTHLY MEETING)

Chairman:

Date: 19th May 2014

Note: The minutes will be reviewed and formally ratified by the BPC on 19th May 2014.