

Bishopton Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 20th July at 7.00pm in Bishopton Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: L. MacMahon (Chair), M. Moses, J Robins, I Robins, G. Baines, R. Fieldhouse.
Cllr. B Jones of Darlington Borough Council.
R M. Smith – outgoing Parish Clerk.

Apologies for Absence received from:- Cllr J Robson, D. Thorman - Incoming Parish Clerk,

1. Visitors None

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Cllr G Baines declared a prejudicial interest in item 6.1 Request from Village Hall Committee.

3. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. They were duly signed by the Chairperson as a true record of the 15th June 2011 meeting.

4. Matters arising from previous minutes

4.1 Traffic control equipment from Andrew Casey of DBC

Awaiting response to letter from clerk. Cllr B Jones spoke to Andrew Casey today and the letter from BPC has been received and awaiting his attention. Clerk to follow up on return from holiday.

4.2 Parking outside Bishopton School

Cllr. B Jones circulated email from Neil Parker (headmaster) who states he will send out letters to parents prior to breaking up and again on return in the autumn. The school becomes an academy on 1/8/2011, and further progress on this topic will be included in the BPC September agenda.

4.3 Redundant Bus Shelters

Bus shelters have been removed. BPC intend to consult residents regarding what should be done with the blank area near the telephone box. Options suggested include leaving it blank (as is), grassing it, installing a seat or placing flower tubs. The council decided to include a request for opinions from residents in the next flyer distributed rather than a separate flyer solely for this topic. Meanwhile the remaining bus shelter needs to be tidied up, cleaned and repainted. Cllr L MacMahon met with representatives of “Urban Blitz”, the DBC project to employ young apprentices to provide training, who will carry out the work but the cost of materials must be paid for. As the work would normally be Streetscene’s responsibility and they referred the job to Urban Blitz, Cllr MacMahon said that she would request this funding from Streetscene. The council decided to request further work including sanding/varnishing of the notice board, but there may be a charge for this. Streetscene to be asked to cleaning the bus sign.

4.4 Quotation for works outside No. 10 High Street

A revised quotation of £760 plus VAT from AWG Ltd. for refurbishment of the tarmac area had been received, following consultation with the clerk. Cllr R Fieldhouse consulted with

the resident who is considering the proposal, but requests that the edging should be done anyway. BPC voted unanimously that F Wall should be requested to carry out the work at a cost of £50, the required materials being already in BPC possession and available.

- 4.5 Tree quote and inspection by Phil Haynes
No response has been received from P Haynes of DBC.
- 4.6 Manor Farm Entrance
A letter received from Roy Merrett of DBC stated that, as BPC were “owners” of the land, DBC had no further involvement with the problem. Cllr J Robins expressed disappointment with this response, and all BPC Councillors concurred. Cllr L McMahon will email Roy Merrett pointing out BPC disappointment with “negative response” and ask that as there are on-going discussions with the Developer over outstanding conditions that DBC also mention the poor topsoil used on the Manor Farm entrance. Cllr MacMahon will also e-mail Nigel Tutty of Thoroughbred Homes requesting action on the entrance. Once dialogue is taking place it may be necessary for BPC to put a time limit for resolution of the problem. Meanwhile, resident R Wall is mowing the grass of the entrance and removing bricks etc. as he goes.
- 4.7 Large Stones outside 6/8 The Green & 3A The Green
Cllr G Baines has carried out remedial work on the stones, and Cllr J Robins expressed satisfaction with the result.
- 4.8 Watering of Tubs and Trees
Cllrs R Fieldhouse, L McMahon and G Baines, and residents Mr. .Potter, Mrs. Fabi and Mr. Ridley are watering tubs and trees. Cllr Moses said that Mrs. Blythman had offered to water the tub nearest to her. Cllr L McMahon is monitoring the situation.
- 4.9 Filing Cabinet for BPC records.
No suitable cabinet has been found yet, but search is ongoing. Meanwhile, Cllr L McMahon is retaining the Minute Book for safekeeping.
- 4.10 Report from DAPCPM
Cllr L McMahon and Cllr B Jones reported on the meeting, Cllr B Jones having been elected as chairperson. Cllr B Jones thanked BPC for their support and for the £25 cheque from BPC towards DAPCPM costs which were no longer being met by DBC. The amount of support provided by BPC will be reconsidered next year after the DAPCPM costs for clerical/administrative/ venue charges have been ascertained. Meanwhile, future meetings of DAPCPM would take place at Darlington Fire Station. Of immediate interest to BPC, Cllr B Jones reported that the Scarlet Band bus service between Bishopton and Darlington was being retained. Cllr B Jones went on to discuss the possibility that BPC might join the Cleveland Association of Councils who would provide legal support, training, etc., and also join the National Association of Councils. BPC were unanimously in favour of pursuing these suggestions. The cost to BPC will be £77.50 per year plus 5.19p per elector (BPC has 294 electors). Next, Cllr B Jones mentioned that it was suggested parish councils buy their own litter pick equipment in future and avoid the problems of obtaining loan equipment from DBC. Finally, Cllr B Jones reported on the work of the DBC Standards Committee and the meeting next month, with the observation that the committee had proved of little worth to parish councils, and as they could opt out of future membership, Cllr B Jones expressed the opinion that some parish councils could have their own code of conduct to be accepted

and signed by councillors, and then administer their own standards' observance.

4.11 Report from Six Parishes meeting

Cllrs M Moses reported that there were two new members from Stillington. One of the main topics of the meeting was the number of cars using the roads round Stillington/Witton/Redmarshall/Bishopton for wild driving, including doing hand-brake spin turns at the bottom of Bishopton Village and other places. The meeting discussed the HMRC ruling that parish councils must register themselves as employers as of the tax year commencing 6/4/2011, and notify them of payments to parish clerks, thereby treating parish clerks as employees with the commensurate need to pay NI, income tax, etc., and the issue of P60s and P45s. This would entail an increased precept for many councils including Redmarshall. Cllr B Jones undertook to enquire of DBC and Cleveland Council for further information and BPC will consult with the treasurer Mr. P. Wood.

4.12 Community Group meeting date.

This has now been fixed as 28th September, 2011. Cllr Moses suggested that that all community groups could be invited to future meetings including the Brownies, the school, etc. when plans for Bishopton's celebration of the Queen's Jubilee are to be a main agenda topic.

4.13 Response to letter from resident Mr. H Bence

This item was brought forward from 11.1 on the agenda in order that Cllr B Jones could be present. It was decided unanimously that a reply be made by the clerk, thanking Mr. H Bence for his letter. Cllr. McMahan to provide some input in response to the query regarding NEDL cable installation but otherwise nothing further could be added to previous correspondence other than explain Council policy on minute taking and to point out that visitors to PC meetings were welcome.

5. Planning applications

5.1 Hill Top, Great Stainton.

No objections were raised.

5.2 Wind Farm Application for The Isles

The planning application comments need to be returned by 7th. October, 2011. The plans were retained by Cllr J Robins prior to circulation around BPC.

Cllr B Jones left the meeting 8.05pm.

6. Matters raised by Councillors

6.1 This matter was put to the end of the meeting so that Cllr Baines could be present for the rest of the agenda.

7. Village Green

7.1 Water main for Manor Farm

A request by a resident to the BPC for permission to install a water main across a part of the village green in front of Manor Farm was discussed. The water main would be installed by a resident, Mr. R Wall. The verbal request was entertained as the work needs to be done before the next BPC meeting in September but it was noted that BPC usually need such requests in writing. Cllr MacMahon will write to Mr. Wall giving the permission of BPC but requesting assurances from Mr. Wall in writing with regard to insurance, health and safety etc. BPC elected to follow this course by majority vote.

8. Wind Farm proposals

8.1 The Isles project was covered under Planning Applications as item 5.2.

9. New Residents

None.

10. Financial

10.1 Bank signatories.

Cllrs L McMahon and G Baines, plus clerk David Thorman and Treasurer Mr. P Wood were granted rights as signatories for BPC bank accounts.

10.2 No invoice was available at the meeting regarding the hire of the village hall.

10.3 The annual audit report was approved/accepted and a notice to this effect will be displayed for 14 days in the notice board.

10.4 The audit fee of £144 was paid by cheque to BDO, proposed by Cllr J Robins and seconded by Cllr R Fieldhouse.

10.4 It was noted that there was £11,115.23 in the Current Account and £956.26 in the Reserve Account. £5369.38 was held for Bishopton Youth Club in the Current Account It was decided unanimously that the Current Account would henceforth hold the BPC funds and the Reserve Account would be dedicated to holding the Youth Club funds currently in BPC custody. An amount of £4413.12 would therefore be transferred from the current account to the reserve account to bring this about. A motion was duly proposed by Cllr G Baines and seconded by Cllr R Fieldhouse, and approved unanimously.

10.5 Cllr MacMahon confirmed that two payments of £50 for strimming/tidying of village green had been made to Mr. F Wall since the last meeting, the amount of £100 having been agreed at the last meeting.

10.6 The expenses for the outgoing clerk were approved and a cheque for £38.94 issued. Discussions about pro-rata salary payments were put to the end of the meeting.

11. Correspondence

11.1 Incoming

- Letter from H Bence [16.06.11]
- Letter from AWG re work O/S 10 High Street [28.06.11]
- Letter & enclosures from Tees Valley Rural Community Council [received 06.07.11]
- Invoice [£30] from Village Hall Association for hire of Meeting Room
- Letter & enclosures from DBC re Planning Application for Hill Top [04.07.11]. Form returned on 16.07.11 indicating 'No Objections'
- Letter & enclosures from E-on re The Isles Wind Farm

11.2 Outgoing

- Letter to Andrew Casey re Traffic control equipment [22.06.11]
- Letter to AWG re works O/S 10 High Street [22.06.11]
- Letter to Mr. & Mrs. Owens re stone removal [22.06.11]
- Letter to Phillip Hayes re condition of various trees [22.06.11]

- Letter to Roy Merrett re condition of Village Green at Manor Farm entrance [22.06.11]
- Letter to David McGaughey of DBC to redirect future planning applications to D. Thorman [16.07.11]

12. Matters dealt with during the month

12.1 Grass cutting to Village Green.

The meeting expressed considerable dissatisfaction with the grass cutting by StreetScene, which was postponed thereby meaning 25/26 working days between the last two cuts and then carried out with the cutting blades set so low that considerable damage was done to the grassed areas by “scalping”. The view was expressed by several councillors that it was the worst the green had looked for some time as BPC had made great efforts to improve it in recent years. Streetscene stated that the cut would not be left for such a long period again. Cllr MacMahon will contact Streetscene again and request that the blades are not so low next time.

12.2 Fly Tipping

The dumping of commercial waste from rabbit breeding in the large layby on Bleach House Lane (C37) was reported to Streetscene who after some consideration decided that it was the responsibility of County Durham and said that they had passed it on to them.

12.3 Planning permission for Solar Panels

One house in the village has had solar panels mounted on the roof. The residents followed planning guidelines and procedures rigidly, which stated that planning permission was not required for this installation but were recommended to apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness. The meeting expressed concern on the effect this ruling could have on the village itself, which is a conservation area particularly the mounting of solar panels on houses in the High Street or on The Green if they were very visible.

Mr. R. M. Smith left the meeting at 8.40pm

Deferred Items

- 10.6 It was agreed to pay the outgoing Parish Clerk for 3 months. A cheque for £187.50 was proposed by Cllr R. Fieldhouse and seconded by Cllr M Moses

Cllr Baines left the meeting at 8.45pm

6.1 Village Hall.

The council discussed a request from The Village Hall Committee to consider providing help with recovery of VAT on the cost of recovering the roof. It was decided to seek further advice from the treasurer, Mr. P Wood.

13. Date of next meeting

- 13.1 21st September 2011 at 7:00pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting closed 8:55pm

Signed: Chair _____ Date _____