

## **Bishopton Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at 7:00pm in Bishopton Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllrs: L. MacMahon [Chair], M. Moses, J. Robins, B. Lock, N. Melaney & G. Preston  
Cllr. S. York of Darlington Borough Council; D. Thorman [Parish Clerk]

**1. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr. C. Headlam. Cllrs. D. Jones & B. Jones of Darlington Borough Council

**Visitors:** Mrs. V. Wood, Mr. T. Wood, Mr. Potter, Mr. T. Hughes

With reference to item 4.3 the visitors raised concerns regarding the proposed play area location off Cobby Castle Lane as follows.

- It was stated that Cobby Castle Lane, beyond the tarmac surfaced adopted section, was a private access.
- It was stated that the existing access and field gate to the north end of the proposed area had been installed by the landowner without planning permission.
- On the above basis it was maintained that access to the proposed play area would need to be via the existing access on Mill Lane.
- The demand for the area was queried bearing in mind that the PC had no positive data on the number of children in the village or whether parents would be happy to let their children use the area under consideration. It was pointed out that the PC was responding to a long history of demand from local residents and, indeed, that a group of some 10-12 children had attended a meeting in the recent past. It was noted that a consultation survey of local residents would be of benefit.
- The nature of the proposed play area was queried and it was explained that the initial aim was to establish a simple grassed play area but it was hoped later to attract funds to construct a small playground with swings etc.
- Concern was expressed regarding vehicular traffic accessing the area, potential vandalism and noise during unsocial hours and the effects of these issues on the quality of life of nearby residents. Comparison was made to the play area that had existed at the nearby equestrian centre. It was explained that the PC would have control of the area and could introduce enforceable by-laws and management regimes to control traffic and unsocial behaviour. The advice of Carlton PC, where a playground already existed, could be sought in this regard.
- A query was raised as to whether the PC had considered asking the landowner to release an area of his land to the north of the village [adjacent to the sewage treatment plant] where there were no nearby properties.

**2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda:** None.

**3. Previous Minutes:**

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved and were duly signed by the Chairperson as a true record of the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016 Annual General Meeting.

**4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:**

4.1 Traffic Control Equipment – progress report & statistics

The Clerk had reported results from the east end of village. 85% speed 33.5mph; max 55mph; Average 26.9mph; vehicles over the limit 25 to 35%; Average speeder 34.1 mph. Following discussions at the previous meeting he had informed the police of concerns regarding the high percentages of speeding vehicles and had been advised that this should become a PACT priority. Accordingly the Clerk had informed Cllr. Preston the PACT Chair. Cllr. York advised that once having established the issue as a PACT priority it would be advisable to ask the police what they intended to do about the matter.

4.2 Section 137 Expenditure & Bus Service – progress report

The Clerk reported that the planned meeting with TVRCC had taken place and had been attended by 4 Parish Councillors and himself. Current state of affairs regarding bus services had been discussed including attempts to get Stage Carriage to amend their no 84 service. Various alternatives regarding

mini-bus services and voluntary car drivers had also been raised. However since the meeting the Clerk had been informed that the Stage Carriage service 84 would be rerouted to include Bishopton and Letch Lane as from 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016. The Clerk was asked to inform TVRCC of this and to arrange publicity of the new service including a notice in the bus stop. Concern was expressed regarding notification that the doctor's surgery would, in future, only allow ordering of prescriptions by post, in person or online. The Clerk was asked to write to the surgery asking if there could be dispensation for those elderly residents without a fax or computer and unable to go to the post box or get on a bus for a long journey.

4.3 Funds held for Young Persons of the Parish – play area - progress report

See Item 1 above. A letter had been received from YoungsRPS finalising details of their proposed lease arrangement and the Clerk had arranged for a retired solicitor to look over the proposed conditions. The Clerk was asked to respond to the letter explaining that, following the Annual Parish Meeting, it had been decided that a consultation survey of residents should take place and that the matter would need to be placed on hold until this was complete. The Clerk noted that TVRCC had indicated that they could assist in such a survey and he agreed to contact them to see if this could be arranged.

Following discussions at the APM and the previous meeting the Clerk had written to the residents who had indicated the possibility of the donation of an area of land as a play area which would be part of possible extensive housing development. A plan of the possible development had been subsequently provided to the Chair. It seemed that DBC had indicated that such a development could only go ahead with the complete agreement of the local community. Bearing in mind the current conceptual nature of the development and the possible difficulties in getting it through planning approval, it was not thought the proposal could meet the relatively short term needs of the community and the Clerk was asked to inform the residents concerned of this and to thank them for their trouble and kind offer.

4.4 Community buying group for supplies of heating oil – update

The Clerk reported that there had been no more expressions of interest in this and it was agreed to remove the matter from the agenda in future.

4.5 BT Openreach wayleave application – progress report.

The Clerk stated that he was continuing to pursue this matter with BT Openreach.

4.6 Village Green Annual Inspection 2016 – progress report

<b>BISHOPTON PARISH COUNCIL – ANNUAL VILLAGE GREEN INSPECTION 19.04.16</b>		
ITEM	LOCATION	PROGRESS
1	Cenotaph Triangle – cast iron sign	Clerk to paint
4	Adjacent speed sign post [opposite 17 The Green]	Blocked gully – matter acknowledged by DBC
8	Telephone Box	Cleaned up by BT
9	o/s Manor Farm	Pothole - matter acknowledged by DBC and area marked out for repair
10	14 The Green	Small pothole in concrete footpath and footpath paving slab dropped – Clerk to arrange repair
11	o/s 3 & 5 The Green	3 stones dislodged from low retaining wall - Clerk to arrange repair
12	o/s 3A The Green	Flowering Cherry tree – Clerk to prune
13	o/s 3A & 3B The Green	Covers in carriageway – NW had completed repair
14	o/s 27 The Green	Old footpath adjacent VG – Acknowledged by DBC and meeting to be arranged

4.7 Dog Bins – Progress report

The Clerk had contacted DBC Streetscene but there had been no reply. He agreed to chase the matter up.

4.8 Update re dedicated bench for the late Sam Tunney

Cllr. Robins briefed the meeting on her discussions with the family during which they had requested that they be allowed to replace the existing seat adjacent to the Cenotaph bus stop with a more robust version, to the PC's specification, which would carry a simple dedication on a brass plate. This was agreed to unanimously. With reference to item 11.1 it was explained that the daughter of a former resident, a friend of Sam's, had asked to be allowed to provide a memorial tree in the Cenotaph area in memory of Sam. The family had been asked about this and had no objection but thought that the area was unsuitable and that the PC would find it difficult to source a suitable location elsewhere on the Village Green. They also considered that the only dedication plaque should be the one on the proposed seat. The Clerk noted that he was responsible for sourcing a suitable tree to replace one recently felled in Town Farm Close and wondered if this would be a suitable location and Cllr. Robins agreed to discuss this with the family.

## **5. Planning Applications:**

### **5.1 Sundial Cottage, 9 The Green, Resubmission**

Once again concern was expressed regarding the difficulty in studying drawings and reading documents on the DBC website. As it was difficult to discern any difference between the revised proposals from those originally submitted the Clerk was asked to reiterate the comments made on the previous occasion at the same time pointing out the website problems made making meaningful comment impossible.

## **6. Matters Raised by Councillors & the Clerk:**

### **6.1 PACT Meeting**

Cllr. Preston reported that the most recent PACT meeting had been on 02.06.16. Two issues were of concern. There was an increased incidence of poaching in the area and residents are advised to communicate any suspicious activity to the police promptly providing vehicle registration numbers wherever possible. The lack of a police presence at the PACT meetings was making communication with them problematic.

### **6.2 Parish Neighbourhood Plan**

The advantages of producing such a plan were discussed but it was noted that most parishes that had set out to produce one had encountered severe difficulties. It was agreed that the Clerk should organise a separate extraordinary meeting to discuss the matter and Cllr. York agreed to see if the former Chair of the Middleton St George PHP could attend to provide his advice.

## **7. Village Green:     None**

## **8. Wind Farm Proposals:**

### **8.1 Lambs Hill Liaison Committee**

Cllr. Melaney had attended a meeting on the previous day. Nothing of real interest to the PC had been discussed but the need to ensure continued attendance at the meetings was stressed.

## **9. New Residents:     None.**

## **10. Financial:**

### **10.1 2016/17 Budget Monitoring & Current Financial Position**

A budget report was circulated for information and comment demonstrating a current account balance of £9751.45 allowing for the payments below.

### **10.2 Annual Audit – progress report**

Communication from BDO was awaited. The Clerk had posted a statutory notice on the PC notice board and stated he would be placing statutory financial data on the website shortly after the meeting.

### **10.3 Payment of insurance premium to DBC**

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had consulted with councillors regarding a requested increase in insurance premium from £185.51 to £442.96. This was almost entirely due to a rise in the 'All Risks' element which was considered inordinately high considering that the PC's assets totalled only just over £21k in value. However the fact that the continuation of the group insurance policy for other local PC's depended on acceptance had meant that the increase had to be accepted. The Clerk was asked to communicate

concern to DBC, to insist that a full explanation for the increase be provided by the insurers and to ask that competitive quotes be obtained from elsewhere for next year. Payment of £442.96 was proposed by Cllr. Melaney, seconded by Cllr. Robins, and agreed by the meeting.

- 10.4 Payment to John Wade [Haulage] Ltd for Skip hire  
Payment of £96.00 was proposed by Cllr. Moses, seconded by Cllr. Melaney, and agreed by the meeting.

## **11. Correspondence:**

### **INCOMING**

1. Undated letter to Chair from Centenary Fields re nomination of recreational space to be a Centenary Field.
2. Email from resident re playground – 18.05.16
3. Email from Helen Crute of DAPC re AGM – 23.05.16
4. Email from Mary McDermott of TVRCC re grant availability for playing field – 31.05.16
5. Letter from DBC re Planning Application – 06.06.16
6. Email from Helen Crute of DAPC re AGM Agenda – 07.06.16
7. Email from Stephen Ragg of CDCCTP re National Regional Event – 07.06.16

### **OUTGOING**

1. Letter to residents re possible gifting of land for playground – 19.05.16
2. Email to Adrian Hobbs of DBC re planning applications – 22.05.16
3. Email to Sandra Innes of DBC re dog bins – 29.05.16
4. Email to Phil Haynes of DBC re trees obscuring 30mph signs – 14.06.16

### **EMAIL CHAINS**

1. 2 emails from / to resident re playground – 18.05.16 & 23.05.16
2. 2 emails from / to former resident re memorial tree – 20.05.16
3. 2 emails from / Jeff Stephenson of DBC re insurance – 20.05.16 & 26.05.16
4. 4 emails from to Mary McDermott of TVRCC re bus service – 23.05.16 to 31.05.16
5. 6 emails from CLCA re various matters – 23.05.16 to 15.06.16
6. 2 emails from / to Jeff Stephenson of DBC re insurance – 26.05.16
7. 2 emails to / from BT Openreach re Wayleave payment – 29.05.16 to 13.06.16
8. 5 emails to / from Steve Brannan and Dave McGuckin of BC re Village Inspection – 29.05.16 to 31.05.16
9. 4 emails to / from Paul Emerson of Durham Police re speeding in village – 30.05.16 to 06.06.16
10. 2 emails from / to Cllr. B. Jones of DBC re bus service – 08.06.16

- 11.1 Email from resident re memorial tree  
See item 4.8 above.

- 11.2 Letter from Centenary Fields  
Noted

- 11.3 Email from Stephen Ragg of CDCCTP re National Regional Event  
Noted

**12. Matters Dealt with During the Month:** None

**13. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016, at 7:00pm, in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8:46pm

Signed: Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_